Hafa Adai!

Happy 77th Liberation Day!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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NMI judges recuse from Torres' case vs Finance

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The list of Superior Court judges left to hear former governor Ralph DLG Torres' case against the Department of Finance and others has been cut short by three after three of the five CNMI Superior Court judges recused themselves from the case.

Superior Court associate judges Joseph N. Camacho, Teresa Kim-Tenorio, and Wesley Bogdan issued orders last week recusing themselves from hearing Torres' suit against the Department of

See JUDGES on Page 4

CUC board affirms Peavey termination

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors unanimously ratified yesterday the termination of Dr. Dallas M. Peavey Jr. as deputy director for CUC's electric power systems and as acting executive director.

Peavey Jr.

All five board members present at yesterday's meeting—chair Janice A. Tenorio, vice chair Donald R. Browne, secretary and treasurer Allen Michael Perez, director Rufo Mafnas, and Commonwealth Economic Development

See CUC on Page 4

CHRYSTAL MARINO
Winners of the 2023 My Marianas Contest pose with the Northern Marianas Humanities Council staff at the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai.

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:
88

Mallari tops My Marianas writing contest

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
Correspondent

After sifting through 57 entries, the Northern Marianas Humanities Council has named Mount Carmel School's Jill Anne Mallari as the top winner of this year's My Marianas Writing Contest, earning her $500.

NMHC announced the winners of this year's My Marianas Writing Contest and presented them with their cash awards during a short presentation ceremony at the NMHC's headquarters in the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai.

Mallari, who is a Class of

See MALLARI on Page 4

Guided-missile destroyer makes port call on Saipan

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, extreme left, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, third from left, pose for a photo with newly installed Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Gregory C. Huffman, second from left, and USS *John Finn* commanding officer Matthew Hays at the Port of Saipan yesterday. USS *John Finn*, a missile-guided destroyer ship, is making a port call on Saipan.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang welcomed yesterday the captain and crew of the USS *John Finn*, a guided-missile destroyer, that made a port call on Saipan.

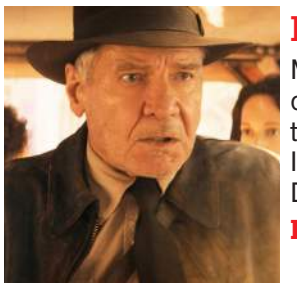
USS *John Finn*, which is under commanding officer Matthew Hays, docked at the Port of Saipan Sunday. It will be leaving in the next

See DESTROYER on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
The Rotary Club of Saipan welcomed their new leadership during an induction ceremony.
PAGE 4

NATION
The Fourth of July is Americana at its core. Here's what to know about this annual holiday.
PAGE 15



LIFE & STYLE
Many moviegoers didn't rush to the theater to see " Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny."
PAGE 18

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Man accused of rape moves to disqualify all of CNMI's judges

The Superior Court law clerk who is being accused of raping a co-worker has filed a motion to disqualify all sitting Superior Court judges from presiding over his case.

William Abraczinskas, who is the law clerk of Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo and is the defendant in a rape case, filed last week a motion to disqualify all Superior Court judges from presiding over his case.

Chief Public Defender Doug Hartig filed the motion on behalf of Abraczinskas.

According to the motion, the defense wants a special judge to be appointed to hear this case instead.

"Defendant believes that a person with knowledge of all facts surrounding this motion for recusal would question the impartiality of the Superior Court judges and so moves a special judge be appointed to hear this case," said Hartig.

However, during a motion hearing yesterday, Superior Court Associate judge Joseph Camacho denied the motion to disqualify.

Govendo and Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto Naraja have already recused themselves from hearing the case.

Hartig explained in the motion to disqualify that the recusal of all judges is required because their impartiality may be questioned for two reasons: one, the alleged victim is a long-time employee of the Superior Court and the court's judges have had interactions with her over the years; and two, the defendant is an employee of the Superior Court.

"A judge must not only be neutral; he must also appear neutral. However, in this case, sitting Superior Court judges' appearance of neutrality may be compromised given the alleged victim's long history of working within the Judiciary," Hartig said.

Meanwhile, Abraczinskas, during his arraignment which was held following the motion hearing, pleaded not guilty to all the charges filed against him.

Abraczinkas, 34, is accused of sexually assaulting a coworker last April 8 and is facing charges of sexual assault in the first degree, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace,

See MAN on Page 4

HAPPY
4TH OF JULY
The freedom that we enjoy today would have been impossible without the hard work of our ancestors. Let us thank them for their efforts.
FROM THE OFFICE OF
Rep. Malcolm J. Omar
CNMI House of Representatives
Precinct #4

USCIS observes Independence Day with naturalizations rites

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will celebrate Independence Day this year by welcoming more than 5,500 new citizens in more than 180 naturalization ceremonies between June 30 and July 7.

In fiscal year 2022, USCIS welcomed 974,000 new U.S. citizens. So far in fiscal year 2023, USCIS has welcomed 588,900 new U.S. citizens as of June 7 and made significant progress in reducing our naturalization pending queues.

"Promoting citizenship and making the naturalization process accessible to all who are eligible are a beautiful extension of many ideals that birthed our nation 247 years ago," said USCIS director Ur M. Jaddou. "This holiday is always a special opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the USCIS mission and to welcome new citizens as they begin their American journey."

Every July 4, we celebrate the day the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, declaring that the 13 American colonies regarded themselves as a new nation—the United States of America—and were no longer part of the British Empire. USCIS commemorates this momentous occasion by hosting special Independence Day-themed naturalization ceremonies across the country.

This summer, USCIS is highlighting the importance of civics and citizenship with a series of events. Civics Season began with a special ceremony on World Refugee Day and will end with the Fiscal Year 2023 Citizenship and Integration Grants award announcement.

This year's Independence Day activities will include special naturalization ceremonies across the country, including close to our nation's capital at George Washington's Mount Vernon, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Virginia, and the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia.

USCIS reaffirms our commitment to making the naturalization process accessible to all who are eligible.

After each naturalization ceremony, we encourage new U.S. citizens to share their naturalization stories and photos on social media using the hashtag #NewUScitizen. ***(PR)***

Tenorio: CUC will work with CPUC for fair and stable utility rates, services

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board chair Janice A. Tenorio assured yesterday that the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's oversight role over public utilities is vital and essential to CUC's commitment to give the consuming public reliable power, water, and wastewater services.

At the same time, Tenorio said, CPUC's role ensures that CUC is able to provide equitable rates reflecting the cost of services.

On behalf of the CUC board, she expressed appreciation to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang for the appointment of James S. Sirok to serve on the CPUC.

With the confirmation of the appointments of Sirok and Dr. John "Jack" Angello to the CPUC, the CUC board is finally able to resume working alongside CPUC, affording the public with both equitable utility rates and services they can rely on.

"In the same token, I would like to congratulate Sirok for his appointment," said Tenorio, adding that the lawyer's vast knowledge as former CUC lawyer brings additional perspective to how CPUC and CUC can better serve the public.

The CUC board's unique composition will also bring insightful and broad range of solutions and ideas to CPUC, Tenorio said, assisting and complementing the commission's regulatory oversight work. Tenorio said the CUC board members have decades of combined experience in senior utility management level, ports management, construction and security, economic development, telecommunication, and personnel and board governance.

With the CPUC now complete, the chair said, the CUC board and "its hardworking management team" is also able to work with the CNMI Legislature in advancing legislation supporting utility services and supporting the utility needs of the Commonwealth and the public.

Tenorio also stated in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that CUC has a good team of board members and that the corporation is fortunate to have this each and every one who has expertise that will allow them to execute these actions that are lined up.

She said there are procurement and hiring procedures that they are following, as well as stipulated court orders with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"We just don't hire from nowhere. There's a process, there's a background check that needs to go through in regards to hiring individuals, whether be on island or off-island," the chair said.

Let us vow on this wonderful day
to lead our country along a road
of prosperity and peace.
HAPPY
Fourth of July
RAMON "RB"
JOSE BLAS CAMACHO
MAYOR OF SAIPAN AND STAFF

NAP to adjust issuance of food stamp benefits

Based on the World Health Organization's announcement declaring that it no longer considers COVID-19 a global health emergency and the CNMI Governor's Directive Order 2023-005 – Rescission of Directive No. 2021-002, the CNMI Nutrition Assistance Program will continue distributing monthly benefits through drive-through and walk-in services at its As Lito office within the first five working days of the month beginning on July 3, 2023, from 8am to 3pm.

Thereafter, benefits will be distributed through walk-in services only until the end of each month. Please follow your schedule day stated in the newsletter that was given to you with your benefit last month. ***(PR)***

DESTROYER

From page 1

couple of days.

Newly installed Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Gregory C. Huffman and Hays toured Palacios and Apatang aboard USS *John Finn*.

Huffman officially took command of Joint Region Marianas, U.S. Naval Forces Marianas and Task Force West last June 21. He is now the senior military official of the U.S. Pacific Command in the CNMI, Guam, and Republic of Palau.

After disembarking from the vessel, Palacios said they continue to welcome members of U.S. military to Saipan. "Hopefully, we will see more of these visits in the near future," he added.

The governor welcomed back Hays, who was here on Saipan 19 years ago, and is now is the commanding officer of this guided-missile destroyer.

Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang said they always welcome visitors and friends from the U.S. Navy.

"I'm so happy to see them come and spend their time here on our beautiful island of Saipan. As you see, a lot of them are going around the island, patronizing a lot of our businesses today," Apatang said. He said he is sure that the visitors are going to enjoy being at the Liberation Day celebration today, Tuesday.

Apatang said it's good to see friends from the military joining the CNMI on every occasion. "It's always good to see them come to the beautiful island of Saipan. We're looking forward to seeing a lot of them in the future," he said.

Apatang thanked Huffman, Hays, and his crew for spending their time on Saipan for a few days.

Huffman said he is excited to be here and he believes this is a critical indicator of how they are postured in this part of the world.

"Getting the opportunity to bring one of our latest and newest destroyers to come to a port visit here on Saipan is incredibly exciting," he said.

Huffman said that getting the opportunity to share in the Liberation Day celebrations over the next few days is a tremendous opportunity for them and the crew to really explore what they are doing in this part of the world.

"I think the CNMI is absolutely a critical portion of the entire region in how we are posturing our forces, how we are able to both protect the United States territory and get a chance to expand what we're doing throughout the region," he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

MALLARI

From page 1

2023 MCS graduate, won first place for her essay, One Ocean, One Home. In second place, winning $400, was Dryllynne Joseph, an incoming junior at Kagman High School, for her piece called The Scarred Knees. In third place, also a Class of 2023 MCS graduate, was Brissa Hunter, with her Our Beaches Become Our Memories winning $300.

Runner up pieces were Cheyanne Koloni Sablan's Traditional Gender Roles, Ashley Muleta's Cure for Itchiness, Donovan Cabrera's My Home Away from Home, Luke John Agulto Lizamas A Son of the Marianas, and Ravin Sablan's Barbecue is Life.

This year's contest focused on the theme of "Senses of Home." Participants were challenged to write a three- to five-page personal narrative essay using their five senses to share their reflections of their home.

In a later interview with Mallari, she said she first had to struggle to think of a topic "because there are so many things to write about our islands…"

As her topic has been about the ocean, she mentally pictured and focused on Banzai Cliff, since that was one of her go-to spots. In her essay she even shared about her fear of drowning, and how she had moved past that now.

Mallari says the writing experience was bittersweet, since she will be moving off island to pursue her education. She is hoping to pursue law and will be taking a political science and business degree in the University of San Diego. Her award money, and the many other award incentives she had received for various local competitions, would be going toward her college education.

Joseph credited her KHS teacher, Mr. Pangelinan, for encouraging and getting her to join the contest. She said he had made it a part of her grade, so it was mandatory. Now she is happy she did participate. "I was shocked [to learn that she won] because I didn't expect this."

For Joseph, her writing process was an emotional journey, just going back to her past and reliving some painful memories, but ones that would help her to always remember her home. Since she will carry her scars wherever she goes, she says she has a bit of Saipan and a flood of memories with her too.

For Hunter, whose topic was also the ocean, the ocean had been a part of her and her family's memories over the years, with many of their home stories featuring Saipan's beaches. She described going through the writing process as a heartwarming experience. Hunter also feels personally disturbed when she witnesses trash on the beaches, so she had to add a portion of that experience in her essay. "It also has an effect on our younger generation, and it will affect our island and our community as a whole."

Hunter will also be moving overseas to pursue her education at Simons University in Boston, so this writing experience has also helped remind her to take a break from work, spend time with family, and make more memories.

Mallari added, "It's also… sharing our stories and knowing people are going to read this and despite all the criticism we might get cause we're just students, it's a fun journey to just reflect on ourselves and our home, and the place we're going to leave soon."

NMHC executive director Leo Pangelinan congratulated the winners and said that NMHC is seeking to publish and distribute these student's essays, endeavoring to spread yearly the print books of these winning essays to all high schools in the CNMI.

"We're thinking about possibly moving this contest to the beginning of the school year. We're thinking about hosting it in Humanities Month, which is in October," he added.

The My Marianas Writing Contest is an NMHC project meant to promote literacy and the diverse backgrounds and experiences of high school students in the CNMI.

JUDGES

From page 1

Finance regarding its decision not to rule on the defense's petition against the contract of special prosecutor James Robert Kingman.

Camacho recused himself due to a conflict of interest because his wife, Viola Alepuyo, serves as one of Torres' defense lawyers.

Bogdan also cited a conflict of interest, saying he used to serve as a legal counsel for Torres.

Without going into detail, Kim-Tenorio said she is recusing herself from this case because a conflict of interest exists.

This means the only remaining judges who have not issued orders of recusals are Presiding Judge Roberto Naraja and Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo. If these judges also choose to recuse themselves, the CNMI Supreme Court will have to appoint an off-island judge to preside over the case.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Torres, through his defense team, filed a petition for a judicial review of the decision Department of Finance made in the Kingman case. The DOF and the Office of the Attorney General were named respondents in this matter.

The petition came after Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita declined to rule or address the merits of Torres' request that Kingman's contract with the OAG be declared invalid.

In addition, the agency ruling dismissed Torres' request finding that the department lacks the authority to issue a declaratory ruling because Kingman's contract had already been signed.

As relief, Torres is asking the Superior Court to vacate the DOF's final agency decision on the grounds that the ruling was arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, and contrary to law. The defense also wants the court to rule that the special prosecutor's contract fails to comply with procurement regulations and is therefore void.

Alternatively, Torres asks that the court set aside the DOF's final agency ruling and remand the matter back to the agency for a decision on the merits of his request for declaratory relief by an independent and unbiased hearing officer.

Torres is challenging Kingman's previous contract with the OAG as a special prosecutor in his ongoing criminal case. Torres argues that the contract did not comply with the CNMI's rules of procurement.

The defense team for Torres is now also strongly opposing Kingman's recent appointment as a staff attorney for the OAG as an assistant attorney general.

CUC

From page 1

Authority chair Frank Borja— voted "yes" to a motion to ratify Peavey's termination effective last April 24. Board member Simon Sanchez was absent.

Before the voting, CUC legal counsel Hunter Hunt said they discussed during the board's executive session that day the recent CUC administrative hearing on Peavey's appeal. Hunt said the motion to ratify just probably provides a better summary of what was discussed at the executive session.

He said he basically apprised the board of the course of Peavey's termination and that the board will now take action.

Perez offered the motion to ratify to the extent that Peavey's termination of requires a vote of the full CUC board directors.

With all five board members voting "yes," the board unanimously approved Peavey's termination as acting executive director and deputy director for electric power systems effective April 24.

It was Tenorio, who was then the CUC board chair pro tem last April 24, who fired Peavey. She informed Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang in a letter that same day that she and CUC's Human Resources staff became aware that Peavey had "exhibited dishonesty and a lack of candor" in his application to serve as deputy director for electric power systems.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s questions after the board meeting yesterday, Hunt said an attorney representing Peavey filed the appeal. Hunt said Peavey, however, did not appear at the administrative hearing and the attorney then withdrew from the appeal. Hunter said the attorney only appeared at the first status conference. He did not identify the lawyer.

Even without Peavey and his lawyer appearing at the administrative hearing, the proceeding continued before hearing officer Jacqueline A. Nicolas.

Hunt said Nicolas, who is a Labor chief administrative hearing officer, served as the administrative hearing officer in Peavey's case pursuant to a memorandum of understanding between CUC and Labor.

Hunt said the Administrative Procedure Act allows a hearing officer to require the proponent of an agency action to present the case even if it's uncontested.

Hunt said Nicolas adjudicated the appeal for three days, including the scheduling conference. He said Nicolas has yet to come out with a ruling.

As to the question why the board has to ratify the termination when Nicolas has yet to issue a ruling, Hunt said there was a question as to which rule applies because Peavey's situation "is a little bit anomalous."

"He was an acting executive director and so the rules are somewhat silent on the removal of an acting executive director. So to the extent that a full board action is required, the board voted today to ratify the decision of the chair," Hunter said.

As to the question whether Tenorio can terminate Peavey as deputy director for electric power systems by herself, Hunt said he can't discuss that as it's a contractual issue.

MAN

From page 2

The defendant's jury trial is set for Oct. 16, at 9am while his pre-trial conference is set for August 30.

According to court documents, the victim went to the Department of Public Safety's headquarters last May 26 to make a walk-in complaint against Abraczinkas, whom she accused of sexually assaulting her at his apartment. She told investigators that she and Abraczinkas had just finished swimming at a nearby beach when the incident happened. The victim claims she managed to leave when Abraczinkas fell asleep after sexually assaulting her.

The victim told police that she didn't tell anyone about the incident because she didn't want to disrupt Govendo's court operations and draw negative attention to the court, but then decided to file her complaint after learning that Abraczinkas had filed a sexual harassment complaint against her with the Judiciary's Human Resources office.

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"May we always value the sacrifices
made to get this independence and work
hard to make our country proud."

HAPPY
INDEPENDENCE
Day

From the Office of Senator
Jude Untalan Hofschneider
2nd Senatorial District, Tinian

Japan group films music video in Marianas

One of Japan's up-and-coming girl groups, Sky Syllabus, recently filmed a music video in the Marianas for their new song TOKIMEKI White Splash, which has been selected as the theme song of Chiba TV for this year's Japan National High School Baseball Championship.

The group's filming was part of a media familiarization tour supported in part by the Marianas Visitors Authority on June 21-23, 2023. The group also filmed a second video featuring hotels, beaches, restaurants, and leisure activities in Saipan.

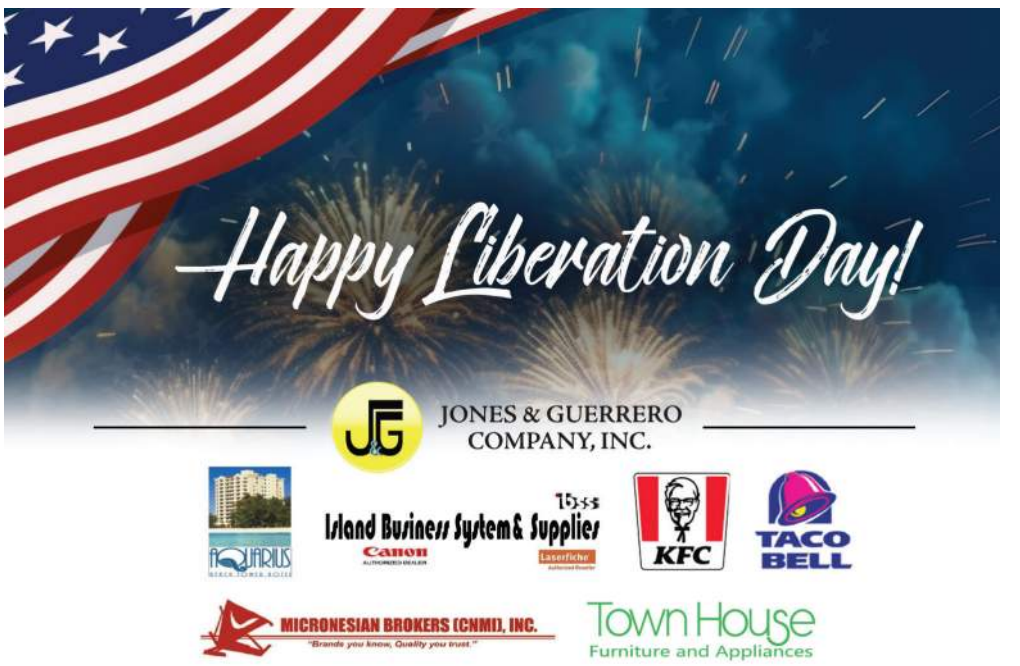
MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion said the CNMI expects to receive nearly $75,000 in ad exposure value through the videos produced.

MVA

Sky Syllabus, a girl group from Japan, films a music video at the Kingfisher Golf Links on June 21, 2023.

The group also filmed at Mariana Seaside Circuit, Grandvrio Resort Saipan, Seawind Marine Sports, the Saipan iconic sign, Surf Club, Mariana Lighthouse, Kingfisher Golf Links, Suicide Cliff, Ladder Beach, Micro Beach, Chalan Kanoa, and Managaha. ***(PR)***

Sending best wishes to you and your families on this occasion.
HAPPY
Fourth of July
From the management and staff of
CIC
Century Insurance
A TanHoldings Company
1st Floor JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan • Tel.: 670-234-0609 • Fax: 670-234-1845



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FREE GIFT 4 YOU
CELEBRATION
JULY 4, 2023
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DOUBLE CRUNCH
ALL CUSTOMERS WITH A RECEIPT NUMBER ENDING IN 4 WILL GET A SPECIAL TREAT DURING OUR FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION
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1 PC CHICKEN 1 PC STRIPS 1 PC HOT WINGS 2 SMALL SIDES MEDIUM DRINK FREE
CHICKEN SALE CHICKEN SALE CHICKEN SALE CHICKEN SALE CHICKEN July 4 - 10, 2023

We wish you to have a great Fourth of July with your family and friends. May it be a wonderful time of joy and happiness.
Happy Independence Day
FROM THE OFFICE OF
Rep. Roy Christopher A. Ada
CNMI House of Representatives
Precinct #1

May the light of freedom shine upon you and fill your life with boundless possibilities.
HAPPY
LIBERATION
DAY
From the management and staff of
Tan Holdings
50 ANNIVERSAR
Tan Siu Lin Foundation

Application open for coral reef management fellowship

Applications for the 2024-26 National Coral Reef Management Fellowship are now open. Prospective applicants must apply directly through the Nova Southeastern University online portal (https://hcas.nova.edu/fellows/apply.html). The application period will be open now through 23:00 EDT on July 20, 2023.

The host agency for the 2024-2026 National Coral Reef Management Fellowship in the CNMI is the Division of Coastal Resources Management. The position will be based on the island of Saipan. The focus of this Coral Fellow's work will be on strengthening the CNMI Coral Reef Initiative's communications and outreach program as well as its Long-Term Marine Monitoring Program through with the following goals:

■ Updating the CRI strategic communications plan to lay the framework of outreach-related programs;

■ Develop key messaging for select CRI outreach programs; and

■ Raise community awareness and stewardship of the CNMI CRI and its related programs.

Background and application

The National Coral Reef Management Fellowship is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Nova Southeastern University, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee. There are seven U.S. states and territories participating in this program: American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Coral Reef Management Fellows are placed in state and territorial natural resource management agencies (the host agencies) in each of these jurisdictions every other year where they work on specific projects related to coral reef conservation. Although fellows are employed through NSU, they are essentially working for the host agencies and should consider their on-site fellowship supervisors to be their direct managers.

The fellowship program's mission is two-fold:

■ Provide coral reef management support in each participating jurisdiction by placing highly qualified individuals whose education and work experience meet each location's specific coral reef management's needs.

■ Provide individual fellows with professional opportunities and training in coastal and coral reef resource management.

Prospective applicants should note that this is a management and policy focused fellowship, and that SCUBA diving will not be permitted.

For more information on applications and to apply, visit https://hcas.nova.edu/fellows/apply.html. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-23-025

AGAG BOOSTER PUMP AND ELECTRICAL SYSTEM UPGRADE

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Agag Booster Pump and Electrical System Upgrade in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of upgrading the existing Agag Booster Pump Station (AG); rehabilitation of existing Agag concrete sump tank, yard piping, aboveground flowmeter and valve station with concrete pad, and all other appurtenances at the Agag site; renovation of the existing chlorine and electrical building; installation of a new booster pump (triplex system); construction of a new perimeter security fencing and facility lighting at the Agag site; and site improvements and grading. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 185 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **July 12, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-23-025, Agag Booster Pump and Electrical System Upgrade"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) August 2, 2023,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on July 17, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Dennis Formalejo, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address dennis.formalejo@cucgov.org and Christie L. Sablan, CUC P&S, Senior Administrative Technician via address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

WWII educational program will host community events at AMP

"Saipan's Land and Sea: Battle Scars & Sites of Resilience," a National Endowment for the Humanities funded educational program in collaboration with East Carolina University, will be hosting several public events at American Memorial Park. All events begin at 6pm and are free and open to the public.

The schedule is as follows:

■ July 6: Genevieve Cabrera will provide a lecture and discussion about Indigenous NMI history. There will also be a traditional Carolinian stick dance performance;

■ July 7: Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero will introduce *We Drank Our Tears* film and then lead a discussion about the film;

■ July 8: Jennifer McKinnon will lead a lecture and discussion about civilian and military experiences on the Battle for Saipan;

■ July 10: Don Farrell will provide a lecture about military perspectives in Battle for Saipan: Military Perspectives, and the NMI involvement in the U.S. war on Japan;

■ July 12: Jennifer McKinnon will lead a lecture and discussion about Civilian and Military Experiences on Battle for Saipan

■ July 13: Genevieve Cabrera will provide a lecture and discussion about Indigenous NMI history. There will also be a traditional Carolinian stick dance performance

■ July 14: Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero will introduce *We Drank Our Tears* film and then lead a discussion about the film;

■ July 17: Don Farrell will provide a lecture about military perspectives in Battle for Saipan: Military Perspectives, and the NMI involvement in the U.S. war on Japan.

Find out more about the Saipan's Land and Sea: Battle Scars & Sites of Resilience program at https://sites.ecu.edu/saipanlandmarks2020/ ***(PR)***

Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free webinars this July 2023, on how to participate in federal contracting. Webinars are held every Thursday from 10am to 11:30am via Zoom. Zoom link emailed to registrants 30 minutes before the webinar.

■ July 6, 2023 – SAM Registrations - *Vendors need an active SAM registration to participate in Federal contracting. The Guam PTAC will take you through the new Entity Validation process, the actual SAM registration, and follow-up requirements. We will also discuss the new annual renewal process.*

■ July 13, 2023 – Federal Contract Opportunities - *SAM.gov is the portal for Federal Contract Opportunities. The Guam PTAC will show you how to use the website to ensure you do not miss any opportunities. Opportunity types, search filters, and search strategies will be discussed.*

■ July 20, 2023 – SBA's Dynamic Small Business Search - *SBA's Dynamic Small Business Search is a database of small businesses registered to sell their products/services to the federal government. Prime contractors, subcontractors, and government officials use the DSBS for market research. Small businesses use the DSBS to highlight their business strengths. The Guam PTAC will discuss strategies to best showcase your business in the DSBS.*

■ July 27, 2023 – Cybersecurity Requirements for DOD Contractors/Vendors - *Department of Defense vendors need to protect some types of unclassified information. We will discuss DOD's current requirements as well as the upcoming Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC 2.0).*

Register on our website: https://www.guamptac.com/news-and-events.php

Scheduled service interruption for Marpi TSA

There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, from 8:30am to 3:30pm for the Marpi Tank Service Area.

Area(s) affected: San Roque

Purpose: The scheduled water outage is to look into Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers that are still connected to the old PVC pipe to be abandoned.

Roadway(s) affected: From Esmeralda Street to Latte Stone Restaurant in San Roque. For the safety of our crew, motorist are advised to use alternative routes or to use caution while driving in the area.

Customers in the area will experience low to no water pressure. Please allow one to two hours after for water to pressurize back into the main line. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission

Special Commission Business Meeting Notice

Pursuant to 1 CMC §§ 9910 & 9911, the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission hereby gives notice that a Special Commission Business Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 6, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. at the Conference Room of the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority located in the CEDA building on Beach Road in San Jose, Saipan.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Ratification of initial actions of Commissioners
4. Election of Officers
5. Public Comment
6. Old Business – Deferred
7. New Business
   a. Discussion concerning initial administrative tasks to be accomplished to get Commission back in operation again after being dormant for a long period of time.
   b. Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee(s) for initial administrative tasks.
   c. Any new topics for discussion.
8. Miscellaneous
9. Adjournment

/S/ James S. Sirok
Designated Temporary Presiding Officer

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special meeting is being called on Thursday, July 06, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located at the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (June 16, 2023)

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):
1. Department of Defense Draft Joint Area Development Concept – Letter of Intent
2. Supplemental Budget Request: Tinian Airfield Sign
3. Supplemental Budget Request: Saipan Airport and Seaport Fire Extinguishers
4. Supplemental Budget Request: Port of Saipan Air-conditioning Units

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)

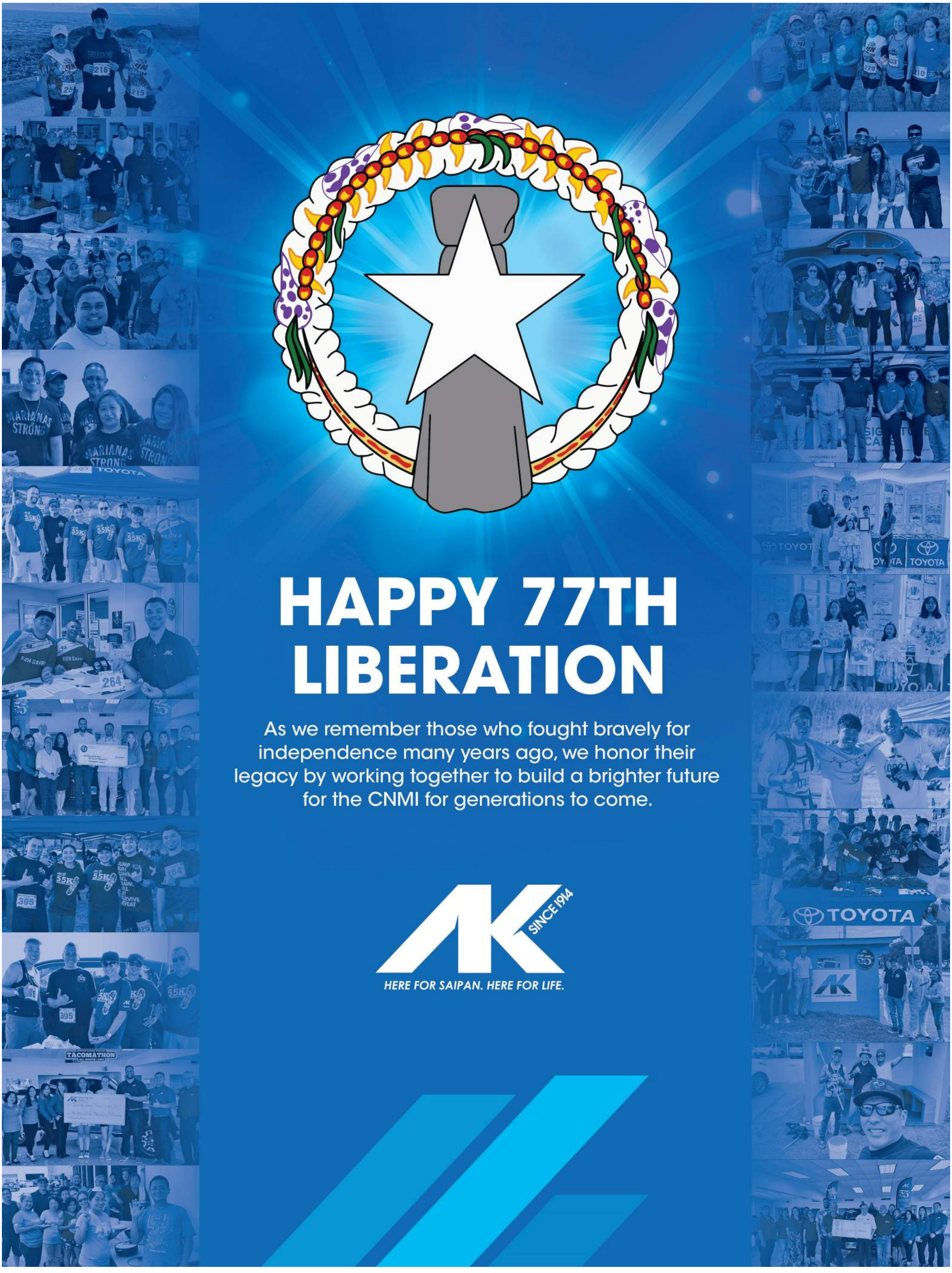
V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom. See link below.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

July 03, 2023


HAPPY 77TH
LIBERATION
As we remember those who fought bravely for independence many years ago, we honor their legacy by working together to build a brighter future for the CNMI for generations to come.
SINCE 1914
HERE FOR SAIPAN. HERE FOR LIFE.
TOYOTA

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 131

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

How to deal with a wounded Putin

Russian President Vladimir Putin has faced down the biggest threat his regime has confronted in more than two decades in power. For now. As details about the dramatic mutiny led by Yevgeny Prigozhin—the ex-con who founded the PMC Wagner paramilitary group, which has been fighting in Ukraine—have emerged, it's become clear that Putin narrowly avoided disaster.

On Wednesday, news media reported that Prigozhin had intended to kidnap two top Russian officials—Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and General Valery Gerasimov, the chief of Russia's general staff—when the two visited a Russian region neighboring Ukraine. Western officials say the plot likely had a good chance of working until details leaked to Russia's Federal Security Service and Prigozhin marched toward Moscow instead.

Two elements of the failed plot stand out.

First, Prigozhin, a brutal warlord with longstanding ties to Putin, seized a strategically important Russian city, shot down Russian aircraft, took over several key military installations and marched his troops to within hours of the Kremlin, all without meeting significant resistance. The sheer boldness of his original plot—which reportedly included amassing huge amounts of military hardware and advanced weaponry—suggests Prigozhin expected many rank-and-file Russian troops to join in the uprising.

Perhaps more surprising: Putin, a merciless strongman who has routinely crushed perceived threats in the past, seems to have allowed the mutineers to walk. Although the details are still murky, Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko, a close Putin ally, brokered a deal under which the rebellious forces withdrew, Prigozhin got safe passage to Belarus, and Wagner troops would face no legal consequences.

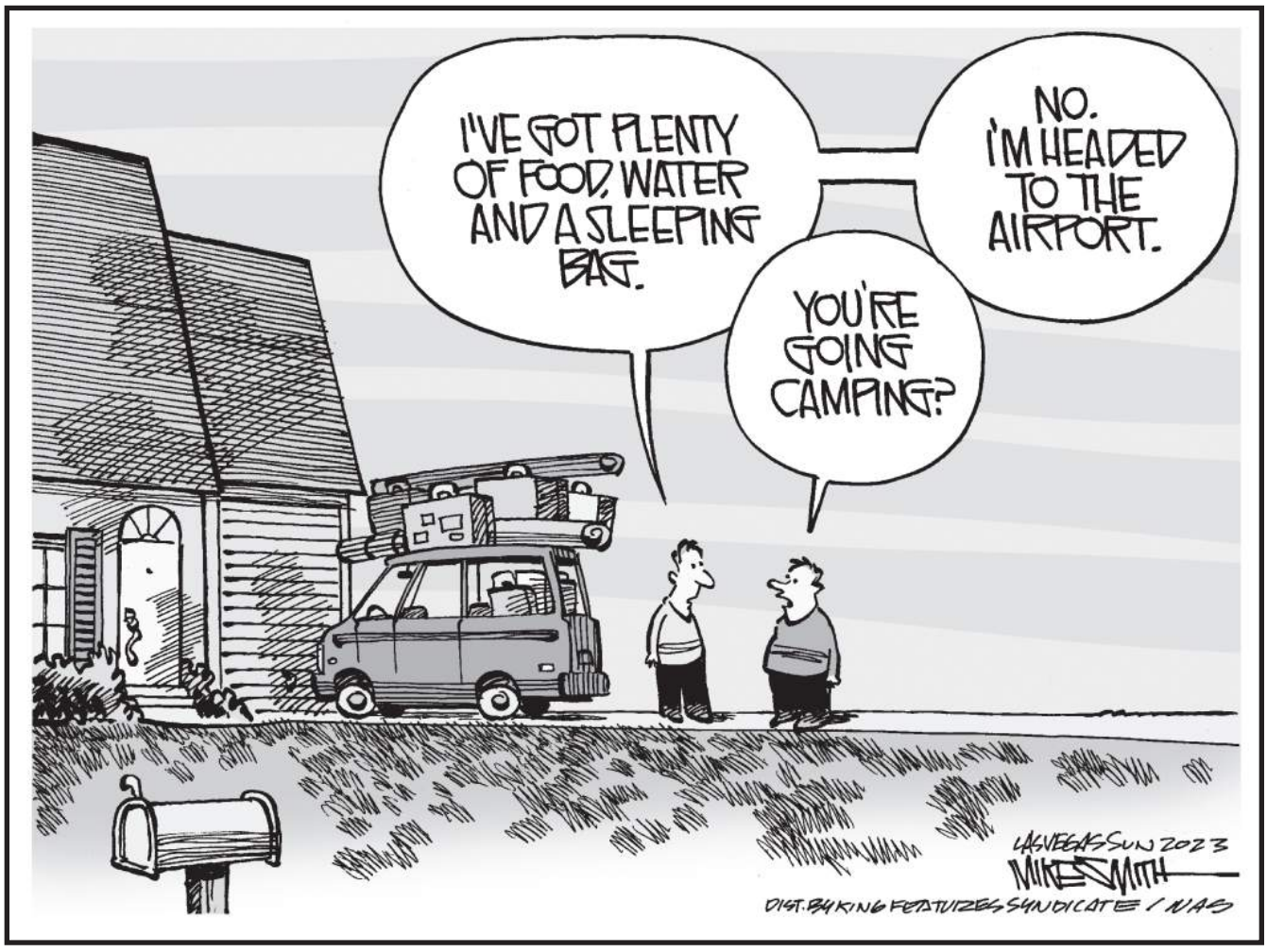
Although any kidnapping attempt failed, Putin has emerged from this fiasco as a much-weakened leader. Not only did he appear dazed and vulnerable, he has now been forced into a widespread shakeup of the armed forces, wary of further disloyalty. Prigozhin's denunciation of the war effort—which he said was based on false pretenses and riddled by corruption—is likely to undermine public support. As Russia's military and its economy continue to suffer steep losses, the potential for more instability will only rise.

How should the West respond? So far, NATO has rightly stayed above the fray. Any attempt to influence Russia's internal politics at such a time is likely to be either ineffectual or counterproductive. Two more modest steps would help, however.

One is to reiterate through all channels the importance of controlling nuclear devices and following established safety protocols. Russia's embattled leader has not hesitated to make nuclear threats in the past, and recently began moving weapons to Belarus. Amid this added chaos, NATO should ensure that risk-reduction measures, including communication hotlines, are maintained. It should also accelerate recent efforts to bolster its conventional forces, secure its borders and improve ballistic-missile defenses so that they have the capacity to meet any escalation.

Next, the West should continue its support for Ukraine unabated. Any withdrawal of the battle-hardened Wagner troops from the fight (Russia is insisting they be contracted directly with the defense ministry) will likely help Ukraine's forces, which are

See HOW on Page 11


I'VE GOT PLENTY OF FOOD, WATER AND A SLEEPING BAG.
YOU'RE GOING CAMPING?
NO. I'M HEADED TO THE AIRPORT.
LASVEGASSUN 2023
MIKE SMITH
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE / NAS

Critics of affirmative action won a Supreme Court victory. But diversity unquestionably matters

By HARVEY YOUNG
Chicago Tribune

Harvey Young is dean of the College of Fine Arts at Boston University and the author of Embodying Black Experience.

The campaign against affirmative action has reduced the complicated process of college admissions to a simple and highly inaccurate sound bite: Black and brown students are being admitted over higher-achieving white and Asian American applicants. Ascribed a flawed essence, affirmative action has become easier to reject.

In recent years, there has been an increase in state-level ballot initiatives to prohibit the consideration of race in the college application review process. And, of course, there have been the legal challenges with judicial decisions more closely tracking with the shift in public opinion away from inclusion. On Thursday, the Supreme Court in a 6-3 decision held that Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's efforts to create a diverse class violates the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. In short, a majority of the court determined that it was time for affirmative action to end.

Affirmative action, at its core, encourages steps (actions) to positively (affirmatively) enable a culture in which talented folks with great potential will not be denied educational or employment opportunities because of their race, religion, gender or national origin. It is corrective—by saying that past practices of exclusion are no longer tolerable or justifiable.

A long and unfortunate history of exclusion exists within the American educational system. Simply walk across certain university campuses during summer reunion season, and you will be able to ascertain by looking at attendees assembled by class year when that school began in earnest to admit women, nonwhite racial minorities and/or international students. This was something that I realized when I attended my first Yale reunion more than 20 years ago.

College admissions is a complex endeavor. It is sufficiently challenging when misinformed narratives—the idea that a person was rejected or accepted solely because of self-identified race or gender—gain traction. The reality is that a lot of people apply to college, and depending on the school, some or most or nearly all applicants will not receive an offer of admission.

To take an extreme example: Yale admitted only 2,275 out of 52,250 applicants this past school year. Although the demographics of the incoming class, beyond their geographic origin, have not yet been posted, history tells us that probably less than 7% or fewer than 150 these students will self-identify as Black or African American. To put this in perspective, the self-identified Black population of the United States is a bit less than 14%; 33% of the residents in New Haven, Connecticut, where Yale is located, identify as Black.

Clearly, the 150 Black students who will constitute the Class of 2027 are not the reason 50,000 people did not receive offers of admission. To assert otherwise is a convenient lie and poor math. Such a contention also willfully overlooks the qualifications and aptitude of the students, of all backgrounds, who received offers of admission.

There are many factors that inform an admission decision within a holistic review of an application. How would you compare an Olympic gold medalist with mostly A's and a straight-A student with distinguished service as a community volunteer? How would you evaluate the potential of an applicant who was elected student body president in high school and aims to be the first person in their family to attend college in comparison with a legacy applicant, whose family members have attended the college for generations always with great distinction?

The admissions review process is even more complex than these scenarios. Indeed, there are scores of variables. Geographic origin can be one. Yale's incoming class includes students hailing from all 50 states in addition to four U.S. territories and more than 70 countries.

This geographic diversity is a reminder that one of the many benefits of a college education is the opportunity to be introduced to a diversity of ideas. And this exposure works only if there is a diversity of people. To bring together talented folks with great potential from various backgrounds and allow them to spend four years together is exceptional training to live and, perhaps, lead in an increasingly interconnected world.

The challenge, which prompts the various lawsuits, is a question of how to think about the value ascribed to self-identified race, gender, religion and national origin among these many other variables. For whatever reason, people seem more willing to understand that it is a good thing for a person from North Dakota to be roommates with someone from California, but they struggle to comprehend why it would be a good thing for two people with varying experiences as a result of their gender, ethnicity or nation-

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Re-affirmative Action—now more than ever

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.

On Wednesday in the nation's capital, officials at all levels were busily working on official papers that would have a lot to do with Jaylin Osborne's hopes and dreams for a bright future in college and beyond.

Jaylin, after all, was the sort of slim 15-year-old who was known not only for looking good in dreadlocks but also for helping his eighth-grade classmates. He had every reason to dream big. "Bright student … a hard-working, curious scholar … a leader among his classmates," was how he was being praised by the head of his charter school, just 11 blocks east of the U.S. Supreme Court building.

Now, the Supreme Court's justices were preparing to announce the next morning, that the court's conservative majority had just decided, 6-3, that America's hopeful, dreaming Black students just don't need the help of "affirmative action" programs any more to get into colleges and universities. America 2023 has moved beyond a need for racially incentivized efforts. Start spreading the news.

Meanwhile, in her official role as founder and chief executive of the Digital Pioneers Academy, Mashea M. Ashton was spreading heartbreaking news to all her school's parents. Jaylin was shot dead at 10:30 p.m. Wednesday as he stood outside the apartment building where he and his family lived. It is beyond tragic: He was the school's fourth student to have been killed in this past academic year. He was also the fourth inner city D.C. youth to be shot dead in the last 10 days.

"The city is not safe," the academy's founder bluntly told the parents in her letter. "It's clear that right now the city is in a crisis."

What seems so damn incongruous is that we are getting similar heartbreaking news quite often about how hard life has become for minority students in many cities—even as the Supreme Court is now telling us there's no need for affirmative action, after all. We are seeing horrible news about death from guns. And there is news about run-amok police officers inflicting violent injustice upon a Black or Hispanic youth. Many of us end up realizing those kids wouldn't have been treated that way if they were white.

And now this. The Supreme Court's conservative majority has decided it is just the right time to move away from recognizing that America's racial minorities may need some affirmative action to help them have an even playing field when they apply for college.

In 2003, the late Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that while affirmative action in college admissions was presently justifiable, she added: "We expect that 25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary (to achieve student diversity)." But in 2014, a Black man was videoed being killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri—and more controversial police actions followed nationally. In 2017, O'Connor told her biographer Evan Thomas that setting that 25 year expiration date "may have been a misjudgment."

I respected her for saying that. And I don't think today's conservative court should have hit fast-forward and rushed to jettison all affirmative efforts even faster than O'Connor envisioned. Indeed, I think O'Connor would have thought it inconceivable that a major city northern police officer would murder a man in slo-mo—by clamping a knee on his neck—and be allowed to do it by other cops who watched silently.

So it is that most of us will admit that Black youths today face pressures that white Americans a generation or so ago never encountered. And that gets us to the place that a wiser, less politically determined court could have taken a grateful nation on this most inflammable issue.

Today's need for some sort of affirmative action isn't about correcting injustices inflicted by legalized segregation in the South. We are confronted today by injustices that occur due to unconstitutional discrimination that is baked into our culture and exists in all regions. That's why we need to reform policing nationwide.

And it is why a former Senate Judiciary Committee chairman from long ago got it just right Thursday, speaking to reporters in his combination office and home.

"The truth is, we all know it: Discrimination still exists in America," President Joe Biden told reporters at the White House, after the Supreme Court's political overreach. "What I propose for consideration is a new standard for colleges taking into account the adversity a student has overcome … among qualified applicants. … The kid who faced tougher challenges has demonstrated more grit, more determination, and that should be a factor that colleges should take into account."

It's late, but not too late. We need affirmative legislative reaction. Call it Re-affirmative Action. Enact it now.

Courage created the 4th of July

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

"He is courageous who endures and fears the right thing, for the right motive, in the right way, and at the right times.
—Aristotle (b.384 B.C.- d.322 B.C.).

Aristotle was a famous Greek philosopher, a student of Plato, and teacher of Alexander the Great. He studied science, politics, ethics, and believed in logic and reason. His ideas have influenced Western philosophy.

In honor of the 2023 celebration of the 4th of July here in the CNMI, I would like to dedicate the following sonnets to all the men and women, civilian and military, who have kept democracy alive from the American Revolutionary War to the present.

Kudos to POTUS 35 John F. Kennedy, and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky, who continues the fight for freedom and democracy in his country today. JFK was a World War II war hero who was awarded a Purple Heart for his actions that saved his crew in the Solomon Islands when his ship, the PT 109, was cut in half and sunk by the Japanese. He swam through shark-infested waters with a leather strap in his teeth, towing an injured U.S. Navy sailor, a crewman on his ship, to safety on a nearby island. He subsequently wrote a book of biographies called Profiles in Courage, which was not about himself. When asked how he defined courage he responded, "In whatever arena of life one may meet the challenge of courage, whatever may be the sacrifices he faces if he follows his conscience—the loss of his friends, his fortune, his contentment, even the esteem of his fellow men—each man must decide for himself the course he will follow."

I humbly request readers of this with friends and family in our three branches of government to please refer this article to them for a refresher on "courage" that they may need, given the daunting state of economics existing here in the CNMI. These poems first appeared in the *Saipan Tribune* on March 31, 2022.

Diamonds of Courage

Diamonds of Courage have many shining facets
They contain other virtues in many phases
They shun lies trying to be honest as it gets
The Truth may hurt but showing Courage amazes
As scales of Justice weigh and balance information

Honesty with yourself summons Courage to fight
Facets of Kindness and Patience help the situation
Showing Empathy for those who are suffering is right
Humility helps when your lack of Courage is failing
and learn the Joy of winning the Sorrow of defeat
Out in the turbulent seas of life we all are sailing
As strong currents of emotional Courage we meet
Diamonds of Courage shine light in all directions
Use them to find the courage of your own convictions."

Steps Toward Courage

From those first shaky steps when they're learning to walk
toddlers show Courage
From taking their first steps when landing on the moon
astronauts show Courage
Marine scientists descending into the deep dark seas
of the Marianas Trench show Courage
Caring for loved ones suffering from Alzheimer's
families show Courage
Spinal injury paralysis victims who won't walk again
show Courage every day
Amputees, cancer survivors, school bus drivers
show Courage every day
Stephen Hawking immobile, speechless, in a wheelchair
had the Courage to study the universe!
Standing up for what you believe in, God, family and country
shows your Courage
have the Courage to say I am Proud to be me."

Aristotle said, " You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of mind next to honor."

CRITICS

From Page 10

al identities to be in conversation.

For much of the past 20 years, I have held leadership roles at selective universities. Although the undergraduate admissions process has always existed outside of my purview, I have witnessed firsthand the good that occurs when students with great potential who possess varying experiences and contrasting beliefs come together. They learn as much from one another as they do from their professors in the classroom.

Although the death knell of affirmative action has sounded, it is difficult to imagine universities and colleges closing their doors to the populations they deliberately excluded in the past. One of the lessons of recent efforts toward inclusion has been that excellence emerges not from a uniformity of look and thought but rather through a diversity of ideas and people.

HOW

From Page 10

undertaking a grueling counteroffensive. It'd be foolish to hold back much-needed military assistance now when it could be most effective on the battlefield and ultimately hasten the end of the war. There's no need for a reckless escalation: The West's job is simply to stay the course.

Prigozhin's brief mutiny called to mind Winston Churchill's old saying about Russia in 1939: "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Perhaps an older proverb, about those who live by the sword, may prove more apt. Putin's reign—long abetted by a grotesque cast of gangsters, mercenaries and war criminals—was never likely to end well for him. The question is how much damage he can do in the meantime.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Rest in heavenly peace

The CNMI recently lost a very hardworking and dedicated educator. Master teacher and administrator +Joaquina "Kinai" Deleon Guerrero Salas entered into the heavenly arms of the good Lord on June 19, 2023, in San Diego, California. I still have her last email sent to me in early June where she kindly assisted me in my work as a Title I instructor for the Public School System. +Kinai was helping the students of the CNMI to the very end of her superb life and she will be sorely missed. Rest in island/heavenly peace forever.

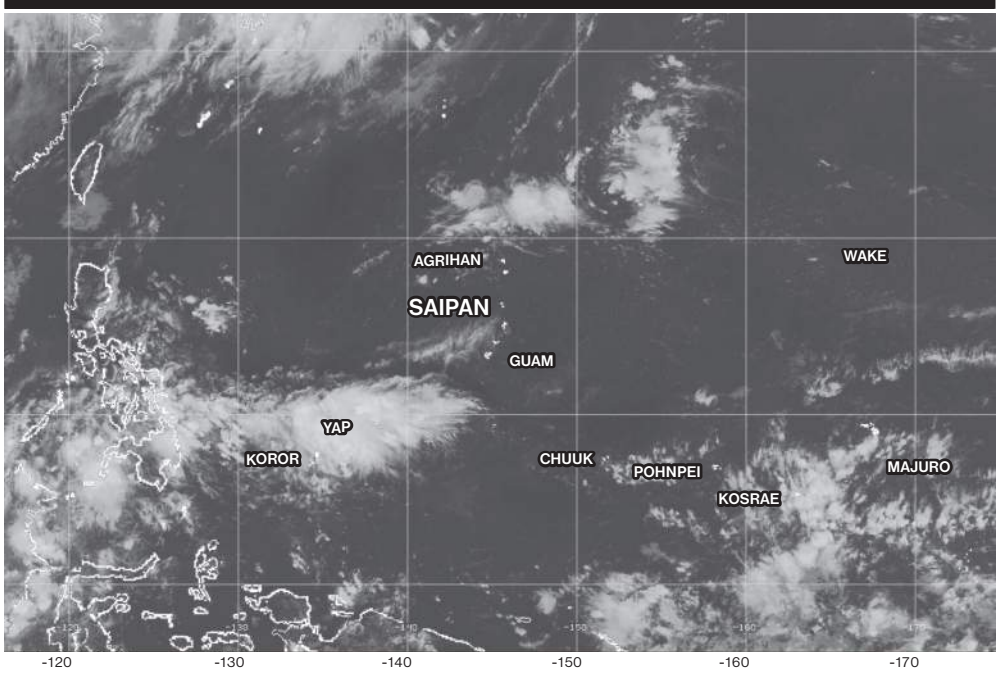
Dr. Jack Angello
Navy Hill, Saipan

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny
85° 80°	84° 80°	84° 80°	84° 79°	84° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:43 AM, MONDAY, JULY 3, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters, with somewhat increased showers over Guam and Rota currently. The Ipan buoy reveals combined seas of around 4 feet, composed mainly of east-northeast trade-wind swell and east-southeast wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms	88° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Chuuk	Isolated Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:12 AM	7:52 PM
Wednesday	-	7:21 AM	8:49 PM
Thursday	-	8:27 AM	9:40 PM
Friday	-	9:30 AM	10:26 PM
Saturday	-	10:29 AM	11:08 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy/Wind	60° / 55°
Beijing	Rain	93° / 70°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	87° / 83°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	87° / 76°
London	Rain	67° / 53°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	85° / 61°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	95° / 80°
Melbourne	Rain	55° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
New York	Thunderstorms	86° / 74°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	92° / 75°
Paris	Light Rain	74° / 57°
Busan	Showers	78° / 73°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	87° / 68°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	90° / 72°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	66° / 54°
Seoul	Rain	89° / 74°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	88° / 72°
Washington, DC	Thunderstorms	91° / 72°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
2:07 AM	High Tide	1.59
6:49 AM	Low Tide	2.20
2:27 PM	High Tide	-0.50
9:50 PM	Low Tide	2.18

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1, 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3467	3:00AM	7:10AM	Daily up to July 20
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
TW9308	4:45AM	8:45AM	1, 5 July 17 to Aug 18
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174 via Guam	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3468	8:20PM	1:50AM+1	Daily up to July 19
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	10:00PM	3:45AM+1	6, 4 July 23 to Aug 20
7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

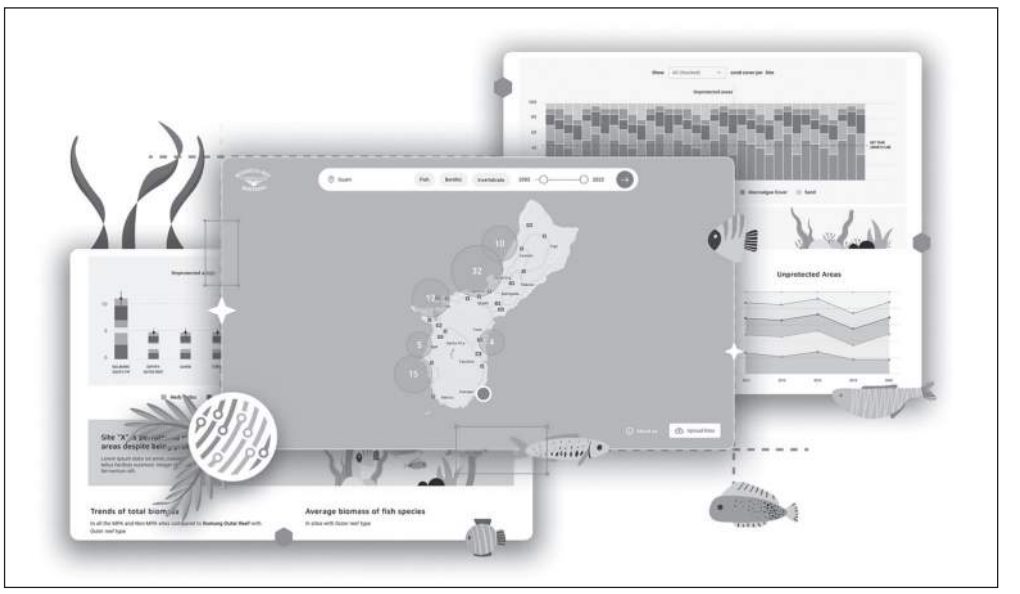
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Reef monitoring app helps protect marine biodiversity

How can you tell if coral reefs are doing okay? One way is to observe them. What types of fish and other organisms appear or disappear? What is the total level of biomass and how does it compare to other areas in the ocean? Watching those trends over time can provide information on the factors that might increase reefs' resistance to climate events and support their recovery in the future. For example, fish biomass can nearly double in response to food availability, and over time, can clean the reef to facilitate recovery.

Leaders of the Micronesia region in the Pacific, who set themselves a bold challenge to effectively manage at least 50% of their marine resources by 2030, embarked on the mission to set up a widespread Reef Monitoring Network to keep a close eye on the health of their local coral reefs. To do that effectively and see if their conservation efforts are working, they needed two things—a standardized system for data collection and an analytical tool, which would provide quick and easy access to data.

That's how Micronesia Reef Monitoring App was created. It is a unified, safe, and accessible platform to hold the growing regional datasets, gathered by hundreds of people within the Micronesia Reef Monitoring Network. It provides impactful data visualization, giving conservationists and decision-makers quick and easy access to valuable insight hidden in the vastness of information. From the number and types of fish which inhabit certain sites to changes over time and comparisons with other locations. It displays complex sets of data in an easy-to-understand way, paving the way for better climate action and regulation.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A mockup of the Micronesia Reef Monitoring App.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A diver collects data as part of the Micronesia Coral Reef Monitoring Program.

Dr. Peter Houk, from the University of Guam Marine Lab, says the Micronesia Reef Monitoring App has created effective science-to-management feedback loops that are already benefiting corals, fisheries, and communities that rely on those resources.

"For example, it showed us an unexpected decline in sea cucumber abundance in Pohnpei Islands, Federated States of Micronesia. This decline was noted in marine protected areas as well as reefs open for fishing," Houk said. "It was revealed that illegal harvesting was occurring, and the information was provided to local stakeholders and local media. The results were a recent court case where the youth of Pohnpei won the right to protect the sustainability of their resources and stop illegal harvesting. The new app allows us to view new data immediately after being collected while providing safe and reliable data storage for many stakeholders. This is having a positive impact on the resources and the communities that benefit from healthy and sustainable resources use."

About Appsilon

Appsilon provides innovative data analytics and machine learning solutions for Fortune 500 companies, NGOs, and non-profit organizations. The company's core purpose is to advance technology to preserve and improve life on Earth. Committed to positively impacting the world, Appsilon's team routinely contributes their time and skills to Data for Good projects, offering many of its services at significantly reduced rates or pro-bono.

About Micronesia Reef Monitoring Network

Micronesia Reef Monitoring Network was created as part of the Micronesia Challenge, an initiative set up in 2006 by the leaders of the Micronesia region, who made a bold commitment to conserving at least 30 percent of near-shore marine resources and 20 percent of terrestrial resources by 2020. It is a network of people, governments, islands, seas and forests that includes the four island states of the Federated State of Micronesia, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae; The Republic of the Marshall Islands; The Republic of Palau; and the two U.S.-affiliated islands: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Since its inception, the Micronesia Challenge has successfully protected land and sea for people and nature, inspiring other nations to take similar action. Leaders of Micronesia have now committed to the Micronesia Challenge 2030 goal for effective management that will increase from 30% to 50% of marine resources and from 20% to 30% of terrestrial resources across Micronesia. ***(PR)***

WHAT IS IT?

■ Micronesian communities, which heavily depend on functional marine ecosystems, have turned towards data science to protect their local coral reefs.

■ Micronesia Reef Monitoring App presents vast amounts of data gathered in this western part of the Pacific in an intuitive and easily accessible way. With quick access to data and insightful data visualizations local conservationists and decision-makers can now better understand the needs of the coral reefs, assess their health, track progress, and manage conservation efforts.

■ The solution also serves as an early alert system, drawing the spotlight on areas where coral reefs might be in danger, benefiting corals, fisheries, and communities that rely on those resources.

■ The app was developed by the University of Guam in cooperation with data analytics company Appsilon. It is part of a wider conservation initiative—the Micronesia Challenge—which aims to effectively manage 50% of the local marine resources. ***(PR)***

Civil-military council reaffirms commitment to collaboration

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam Gov. Lourdes Leon Guerrero and Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman are joined by U.S. military and Cabinet officials after the Civil-Military Coordination Council meeting at JRM Headquarters last June 29.

ASAN, Guam—Guam Gov. Lourdes Leon Guerrero and Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman convened the Civil-Military Coordination Council at JRM Headquarters last June 29 to foster collaboration between the Department of Defense and the Guam government.

More than a dozen Gov-Guam agencies were represented, including the Department of Public Works, the Guam Department of Labor, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Guam Environmental Protection Agency, the Guam International Airport, the Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority, and the Department of Land Management.

In her opening remarks, Leon Guerrero welcomed Huffman and expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaboration. "The insight we gain from your team is a fundamental portion of our discussions," Leon Guerrero said.

The meeting ran for more than two hours as government agency directors and personnel from multiple service branches shared updates and brainstormed solutions to common challenges. Topics ranged from pet air transportation for military personnel assigned to Guam, to complex regional subjects such as the construction labor shortage and the challenges facing the housing market.

This council meeting was the first for Huffman who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share knowledge among so many experts. "This is a critical partnership and helps ensure we work as a team," Huffman said. "I'm impressed by the amount of information shared, and I am confident that we will continue to work together closely."

As the meeting ended, participants prepared action lists and made plans for continued coordination. The next CMCC is tentatively scheduled for some time in the fall.

The CMCC was established in 2010; it provides a forum for open communication to holistically approach and resolve topics as partners. The council meets at least once a year. ***(PR)***

Business

First Hawaiian, Inc. announces senior leadership transitions

First Hawaiian, Inc. announced the upcoming retirements of three members of its senior leadership team: vice chair and chief risk officer Ralph Mesick; vice chair and chief lending officer Lance Mizumoto; and executive vice president and chief human resources officer Iris Matsumoto.

"Ralph, Lance, and Iris have been instrumental in the success of our bank. Their dedication, leadership, and embodiment of our culture and relationship strategy have helped guide the organization," said Bob Harrison, chairman, president, and chief executive officer of First Hawaiian. "In anticipation of their retirement, our succession planning process will help ensure a seamless continuity of their invaluable contributions. Ralph, Lance and Iris have left a legacy of relationship building with our customers, employees and shareholders and we are incredibly grateful for their commitment to preparing their successors for this transition."

Anonuevo Blakeney Nakamura

In anticipation of these retirements, First Hawaiian is excited to announce the promotions of the individuals that will succeed Mesick, Mizumoto, and Matsumoto.

Lea Nakamura, First Hawaiian deputy chief risk officer, will be appointed as chief risk officer, and Darlene Blakeney, executive vice president and division manager for the Corporate Banking Division of First Hawaiian and president of First Hawaiian Leasing, will be appointed as chief lending officer, effective July 1, 2023, and Oct. 1, 2023, respectively.

Each will join the First Hawaiian Senior Management Committee upon her respective appointment. Additionally, Gina Anonuevo, chief compliance officer of First Hawaiian, will take over as chief human resources officer effective Dec. 1, 2023. As chief human resources officer, Anonuevo will continue to serve as a member of the First Hawaiian Senior Management Committee.

These newly promoted leaders bring a wealth of experience to their respective roles. Nakamura has over 34 years of banking experience. Prior to serving as deputy chief risk officer, she served as treasurer for First Hawaiian and in various roles in the Risk Group. She has experience in additional areas including swaps, foreign exchange, credit analyses, capital and liquidity management and analytics, stress testing and model management.

Blakeney has been with First Hawaiian since 2015 and has a total of over 25 years of banking experience in lending and credit administration. In addition to her banking experience, she served as the director of Finance and Administration for Hanahau'oli School for nine years.

Anonuevo has served as the bank's chief compliance officer since 2011. Prior to that, she served as director of Audit for First Hawaiian for five years and served as a bank examiner with the FDIC for eight years.

Harrison expressed his enthusiasm about the future of the company's leadership, "I am delighted to welcome Lea and Darlene to the senior management team and to welcome Gina to her new role. Lea, Darlene and Gina are highly qualified for their new positions, and each of them has a thoughtful and nuanced understanding of relationship banking and risk management and their importance in our corporate culture. I am confident that each will be able to pick up seamlessly where her predecessor left off and that we will continue the excellent work that has enabled us to serve our customers so well for 165 years."

Harrison thanked Ralph, Lance, and Iris, "All of us at First Hawaiian extend our heartfelt gratitude for your exceptional leadership and dedicated service."

Forward-looking statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements reflect First Hawaiian's current views with respect to, among other things, future events and our financial performance. These statements are often, but not always, made through the use of words or phrases such as "may", "might", "should", "could", "predict", "potential", "believe", "expect", "continue", "will", "anticipate", "seek", "estimate", "intend", "plan", "projection", "would", "annualized" and "outlook", or the negative version of those words or other comparable words or phrases of a future or forward-looking nature. These forward-looking statements are not historical facts, and are based on current expectations, estimates and projections about our industry, management's beliefs and certain assumptions made by management, many of which, by their nature, are inherently uncertain and beyond our control. Accordingly, we caution you that any such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and are subject to risks, assumptions, estimates and uncertainties that are difficult to predict. Although First Hawaiian believes that the expectations reflected in these forward-looking statements are reasonable as of the date made, there can be no assurance that actual results will not prove to be materially different from the results expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. A number of important factors could cause actual results or performance to differ materially from the forward-looking statements.

For a discussion of some of these risks and important factors that could affect our future results and financial condition, see First Hawaiian's U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") filings, including, but not limited to, its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2022, and Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2023.

First Hawaiian, Inc.

First Hawaiian, Inc. (NASDAQ: FHB) is a bank holding company headquartered in Honolulu, Hawaii. Its principal subsidiary, First Hawaiian Bank, founded in 1858 under the name Bishop & Company, is Hawaii's oldest and largest financial institution with branch locations throughout Hawaii, Guam and Saipan. The company offers a comprehensive suite of banking services to consumer and commercial customers including deposit products, loans, wealth management, insurance, trust, retirement planning, credit card and merchant processing services. Customers may also access their accounts through ATMs, online and mobile banking channels. For more information about First Hawaiian, Inc., visit the company's website, www.fhb.com. ***(PR)***

Yellen is making a long-awaited trip to China this week

WASHINGTON (AP)—Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen will travel to Beijing Thursday as part of an ongoing Biden administration effort to thaw U.S.-China relations, a senior Treasury official said Sunday.

Yellen, who has called the notion of an economic decoupling from China "disastrous," has frequently said in the past year that she would like to visit China. She says the two nations "can and need to find a way to live together" in spite of their strained relations over geopolitics and economic development. Yellen will meet this week with Chinese officials, U.S. companies doing business in China and with Chinese people and will stay through July 9, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of the trip.

The goal of her visit is to deepen and increase the frequency of communication between U.S. and China, the official said. While there are clear areas of common interest where Yellen can make progress, the official said, there are also significant disagreements that will not be resolved through a single trip.

The most recent flareup came after President Joe Biden referred to Chinese President Xi Jinping as a "dictator " during a campaign fundraiser earlier in June. The Chinese protested loudly, but Biden later said his blunt statements regarding China are "just not something I'm going to change very much."

The U.S. president's statements have come after tensions over a Chinese surveillance balloon that the U.S. government shot down, U.S.-led restrictions on China's access to advanced computer chips and ongoing tensions about the status and security of Taiwan. Yet in Biden's dictator comments during a California fundraiser, the president told his audience "don't worry" about China as the U.S. has taken steps to compete with its financial and technological ambitions.

AP

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen testifies before the House Financial Services Committee during a hearing regarding the state of the international financial system at the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, June 13, 2023.

Yellen's trip would follow Secretary of State Antony Blinken's two-day stop in Beijing in June, the highest-level meetings in China in the past five years. Blinken met with Xi and the two agreed to stabilize deteriorated U.S.-China ties. However, better communications between their militaries could not be agreed upon. Treasury officials didn't specify which officials she'd meet with, but said it would not be Xi.

The treasury secretary's visit will be more focused on stabilizing the global economy and challenging China's support of Russia in its ongoing land invasion of Ukraine. China has developed an uncomfortable closeness with the Kremlin — claiming neutrality in the war, but holding joint military drills and frequent state visits with Russian officials.

Still, U.S. officials hold out hope that U.S-China relations will not further deteriorate.

Yellen met with her previous Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier Liu He, in January in Switzerland and made a big speech at Johns Hopkins University in April calling for " cooperation on the urgent global challenges of our day " between the two countries for the sake of maintaining global stability, while supporting economic restrictions on China to advance U.S national security interests.

New developments show glimmers of what could spark a renewed relationship.

At a Paris summit on global finance last week, a deal was brokered that restructured Zambia's debt with its creditors, which include China — Zambia's biggest creditor holding $4.1 billion of a total $6.3 billion debt load. The deal may provide a roadmap for how China will handle restructuring deals with other nations in debt distress, and shows the Asian superpower is willing to cooperate in negotiations with other Group of 20 nations.

"I am pleased that the international community has come together to support Zambia in its time of need," Yellen said in a statement last week.

However, there are plenty of other tensions impacting the superpowers' relationship. The discovery of a Chinese surveillance balloon traversing over sensitive areas of the U.S. in February put a damper on her previous travel plans, and further strained relations.

GRMC welcomes full-time rheumatologist

DEDEDO, Guam—Guam Regional Medical City proudly welcomes rheumatologist Dr. Jirapat Teerakanok to Guam.

Teerakanok joins GRMC in a permanent, full-time position, specializing in diagnosis and treatment of various autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus, osteoporosis, and more. He is currently Guam's only on-island provider for rheumatology.

Teerakanok is double board-certified in rheumatology and internal medicine in the U.S. and Thailand. He is also a certified clinical densitometrist. Prior to his arrival on Guam, Teerakanok last served at the Samitivej Sriracha Hospital in Thailand.

Chief medical officer Dr. Alexander "Beau" Wielaard said, "We are excited to welcome Dr. Teerakanok on our team at GRMC to serve the people of Guam. With a full-time rheumatologist on-board, this allows GRMC to provide our island with greater access to specialty care that would normally be sought off-island."

To schedule an appointment with Teerakanok, contact GRMC's Referral Management Office at (671) 633-GRMC (4762) or emailrefer@grmc.gu. ***(PR)***

Nation

What to know about Fourth of July holiday origins and traditions

ST. LOUIS (AP)—The Fourth of July is Americana at its core: parades and cookouts and cold beer and, of course, fireworks.

Those pyrotechnics also make it an especially dangerous holiday, typically resulting in more than 10,000 trips to the emergency room. Yet fireworks remain at the center of Independence Day, a holiday 247 years in the making.

Here are five things to know about July Fourth, including the origin of the holiday and how fireworks became part of the tradition.

Fireworks explode over the Las Vegas Strip during a 4th of July Fireworks show, July 4, 2021, in Las Vegas.

WHAT'S THE ORIGIN OF INDEPENDENCE DAY?

The holiday celebrates the Second Continental Congress' unanimous adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, a document announcing the colonies' separation from Great Britain.

One year later, according to the Library of Congress, a spontaneous celebration in Philadelphia marked the anniversary of American independence.

But across the burgeoning nation, observations didn't become commonplace until after the War of 1812. It quickly took off: The Library of Congress notes that major historic events in the 19th century, such as groundbreaking ceremonies for the Erie Canal and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, were scheduled to coincide with Fourth of July festivities.

HOW DID FIREWORKS BECAME A JULY FOURTH TRADITION?

The display of pyrotechnics has been a big part of Independence Day from the outset. Founding Father John Adams saw it coming.

Commemoration of America's independence "ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more," Adams wrote in a letter to his wife, Abigail, dated July 3, 1776.

Fireworks were around centuries before America became a nation. The American Pyrotechnics Association says many historians believe fireworks were first developed in the second century B.C. in ancient China by throwing bamboo stalks into fires, causing explosions as the hollow air pockets overheated.

By the 15th century, fireworks were widely used for religious festivals and public entertainment in Europe and early U.S. settlers carried on those traditions, the association said.

HAS A PRESIDENT EVER REFUSED TO CELEBRATE?

Presidents from George Washington to Joe Biden have celebrated the nation's birth on the Fourth of July, with one exception: Adams.

His letter to his wife aside, Adams refused to celebrate the holiday on July 4 because he felt July 2 was the real Independence Day. Why? It was on July 2, 1776, that the Continental Congress voted in favor of the resolution for independence, though the Declaration of Independence wasn't formally adopted until two days later.

Adams was so adamant that he turned down invitations to festivals and other events, even while serving as the nation's second president. Ironically, Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, both died on the 50th anniversary of the document's formal adoption, July 4, 1826.

HOW POPULAR ARE FIREWORKS?

Consumer sales of fireworks have grown rapidly over the past two decades.

Statistics from the American Pyrotechnics Association show that in 2000, American consumers spent $407 million on fireworks. By 2022, that figure rose to $2.3 billion. The biggest jump came during the COVID-19 pandemic, when public fireworks displays were shut down. Consumer sales jumped from $1 billion in 2019 to $1.9 billion in 2020.

"People went to the fireworks store beginning Memorial Day weekend and they just didn't stop," said Julie Heckman, executive director of the American Pyrotechnics Association. "They were firing off fireworks all of 2020. It shocked the industry, to be quite honest with you."

Sales are expected to rise another $100 million this year, the association said. It helps that the Fourth of July is on a Tuesday, creating essentially a four-day weekend.

ARE FIREWORKS DANGEROUS?

Despite widespread education efforts, thousands of Americans are badly injured by fireworks each year, and this year is no exception.

Late Saturday night, firefighters and medics were called to Lexington Township, a suburb of Kansas City, Kansas, for reports of a shed on fire and arrived to find fireworks actively exploding from the burning shed and several people lying injured on the ground. Firefighters, medics and local police dragged the victims from the area to safety, and four people were taken to hospitals — two with serious injuries, Northwest Consolidated Fire District Chief Todd Maxton said in a statement.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that in 2022, 10,200 people were treated at emergency rooms and 11 deaths were blamed on fireworks. About three-quarters of injuries happened in the period around the Fourth of July.

About one-third of the injuries were to the head, face, ears or eyes. Finger, hand and leg injuries are common, too.

"I have seen people who have blown off fingers," said Dr. Tiffany Osborn, an emergency room physician at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. "I've seen people who have lost eyes. I've seen people who have significant facial injuries."

Children under 15 make up nearly one-third of those injured by fireworks. Sparklers often are blamed for burns to children under age 5. Osborn suggested giving small children glow sticks or colorful streamers instead.

For those planning to shoot off fireworks, Heckman urged finding a flat, hard, level surface away from structures and other things that could catch fire. The person responsible for the fireworks should avoid alcohol. Children should never ignite them.

Osborn encouraged having a bucket or hose nearby in case of fire or explosion. Shoot off one at a time and walk away quickly after igniting, she said, and never relight or handle a malfunctioned firework. When done, shovel up the remains and soak them before disposing.

ACROSS THE NATION

10 states plan to sue EPA over standards for residential wood-burning stoves

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—Attorneys general from 10 states plan to sue the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, saying its failure to review and ensure emissions standards for residential wood-burning stoves has allowed the continued sale of appliances that could worsen pollution. That means programs that encourage people to trade in older stoves and other wood-burning appliances, such as forced-air furnaces, haven't necessarily improved air quality, the states say. "If newer wood heaters do not meet cleaner standards, then programs to change out old wood heaters may provide little health benefits at significant public cost," the states wrote Thursday in a 60-day notice of intent to sue. The states involved are Alaska, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington, as well as the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. They allege that the EPA's current standards aren't good enough and that even if they were, the agency's testing and certification program is so ineffective that it has failed to ensure those standards. The EPA declined to comment on pending litigation. The states allege that the EPA's current standards must be reviewed and that its testing and certification program is so ineffective, it has failed to ensure the existing standards.

Thousands of hotel workers in Southern California on strike, demanding better pay, benefits

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Thousands of hotel workers in Southern California walked off the job on Sunday, demanding higher pay and better benefits in what the union is calling the largest strike in its history. Cooks, room attendants, dishwashers, servers, bellmen and front desk agents at hotels were picketing outside major hotels in Los Angeles and Orange counties just as the summer tourist is ramping up. Last month, members of Unite Here Local 11 voted 96% in favor of authorizing the strike. The union is seeking better wages, improved health care benefits, higher pension contributions and less strenuous workloads. In addition, the union wants to create a "hospitality workforce housing fund" to help workers deal with the soaring costs of living in greater Los Angeles. Many employees report commuting hours to work because they can't afford to live near their jobs.

"Our members were devastated first by the pandemic, and now by the greed of their bosses," union co-president Kurt Petersen said in a statement. "The industry got bailouts while we got cuts."

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

State Dept. failed to plan or respond fast enough in Afghanistan collapse

WASHINGTON (AP)—The State Department failed to do enough planning before the collapse of the U.S.-backed government in Afghanistan, according to a Biden administration review of the department's performance during the chaotic evacuation of Americans and Afghan allies. The review repeatedly blames the administrations of both former President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden for their efforts before and after the August 2021 departure of U.S. forces from Kabul. The U.S. evacuated an estimated 124,000 Afghans from the country. Republicans have in turn accused Biden of not taking responsibility for intelligence failures leading up to the Taliban's seizure of the country and for the scenes of chaos at Kabul's airport, where 13 U.S. troops and about 170 Afghans died in a suicide bombing. Biden was defiant when asked Friday if he would admit the U.S. made mistakes before and during its withdrawal. "Remember what I said about Afghanistan? I said al-Qaida would not be there," Biden said. "I said we'd get help from the Taliban. What's happening now? What's going on? Read your press. I was right." The U.S. in July 2022 killed al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahri in a drone strike at his Kabul home, part of what the Biden administration calls an "over the horizon" capacity to target the group after the withdrawal. But a United Nations monitoring team reported in May that al-Qaida considers Afghanistan "a safe haven" and that the Taliban had not met previous commitments on counterterrorism. "Al-Qaida maintains a low profile, focusing on using the country as an ideological and logistical hub to mobilize and recruit new fighters while covertly rebuilding its external operations capability," the monitors said in their report.

PH considering US request to host visa processing center for Afghans despite concerns

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Thursday that a request for his country to temporarily host a U.S. immigrant visa processing center for thousands of Afghan nationals faces security and other concerns but is still being considered by his administration. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken first relayed the request to his Philippine counterpart last year, and President Joe Biden discussed the request when Marcos visited the United States in May, Philippine officials said. The full details of the request, which remains under negotiations between the treaty allies, have not been made public, but Marcos said he was told by American officials that only a maximum of 1,000 Afghan nationals would be allowed to stay in the Philippines at any one time while their special immigrant visas are being processed. A Philippine official said an initial 600 Afghan nationals would be allowed in a "pilot phase" if the U.S. proposal gets approved. The proposal was still being discussed by national security, law enforcement, foreign affairs and other Philippine agencies before submitting a recommendation to Marcos, said the official, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss the issue publicly. The Afghan nationals to be considered for resettlement primarily worked for the U.S. government in Afghanistan or were deemed eligible for U.S. special immigrant visas but were left behind when Washington withdrew from the country as Taliban militants took back power in a chaotic period in August 2021. "We want to help," Marcos said in answer to a question at a news conference. But, he said, there are security concerns and "even more difficult legal and logistical issues because if the plan as it stands runs exactly as it's planned, that's nice, we won't have any problem. But what plan ever ran exactly as you had hoped?" "It's entirely possible that we will not find a way to make it happen," he added. Some Filipino officials have expressed fears the Afghan nationals could become targets of attacks while in the Philippines. Others raised legal questions about an arrangement where U.S. authorities would have a say in vetting who could enter the Philippines. One prospective problem is what to do with Afghan nationals whose U.S. special visa immigrant application is indefinitely stalled or rejected, Marcos said.

Shootout in southwest Pakistan kills 4 security forces, 1 militant, officials say

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP)—Militants attacked a security post in Pakistan's southwestern Baluchistan province, triggering a shootout that left three police officers a paramilitary soldier and one militant dead on Sunday, officials said. Local police chief, Abdul Salam Baloch said one of the militants was also killed while the others managed to escape to the mountainous terrain in the Shirani district, bordering North Waziristan where they have multiple hideouts. Baloch said the attackers used hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades and assault rifles on the joint security post of police and paramilitary forces. Bilal Shabbir, a top administrative officer in Shirani district, said two militants and one paramilitary trooper were wounded in the shootout that lasted for about two hours. He said the attackers managed to escape with their wounded accomplices. He added that security forces launched a search operation in the area and surrounding mountains to trace and eliminate the perpetrators. Head of the provincial government, Abdul Quddoos Bizenjo, condemned the attack and expressed grief over the loss of the four security men. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but militants from the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, known as the Pakistani Taliban or TTP, operate in the area and have been involved in past attacks on security forces in recent months.

25 dead after bus crashes and catches fire in western India

NEW DELHI (AP)—A tire blowout caused a bus to lose control and crash into a road divider and burst into flames, killing 25 people in western India early Saturday, police told local media. Police officer Sunil Kadasne told the Press Trust of India news agency that 33 people were on the bus when the crash occurred around 1:30 a.m. on a highway in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra state. The eight survivors were taken to a hospital, he said. The private travel bus was headed to Pune city from Nagpur, another city in the state. Deadly road accidents are common in India, often due to reckless driving, poorly maintained roads and aging vehicles. More than 110,000 people are killed every year in road accidents across India, according to police.

World

Russian drone strike on Kyiv all shot down

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—After a relative lull, Russia launched a drone attack early Sunday on Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, officials said. It was the first such attack of the war in 12 days.

AP

Ukrainian air defense intercepts a Shahed drone mid-air in the third Russia aerial attack on the capital in the last 24 hours in Kyiv, Ukraine, on May 30, 2023.

All of the Iranian-made Shahed exploding drones were detected and shot down, according to Serhii Popko, the head of the Kyiv city administration. In addition to the city itself, the surrounding Kyiv region was targeted. Kyiv regional Gov. Ruslan Kravchenko reported that one person was wounded by falling debris from a destroyed drone.

Officials in the Ukrainian capital didn't provide an exact number of drones that attacked the city. But Ukraine's air force said that across the country, eight Shaheds and three Kalibr cruise missiles were launched by the Russians.

Further south, a 13-year-old boy was wounded in overnight shelling of Ukraine's partially occupied southern Kherson province, said Oleksandr Tolokonnikov, spokesman for the Ukrainian administration of the province.

The child was wounded when the Russian army shelled the village of Mylove on the banks of the Dnieper River in the Beryslav district, Tolokonnikov said.

"The child was hospitalized, there is no threat to his life," Tolokonnikov added," he said on state TV.

Shelling of Kherson province continued Sunday morning, wounding four people in the regional capital, also called Kherson. The regional prosecutor's office said that a residential area of the city was targeted by Russian troops operating in the Russia-occupied part of the Kherson province. "

"At least four citizens were wounded, two of them due to a targeted strike on a high-rise building," the office wrote on Telegram.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's military reported that the most intense fighting continued in Ukraine's industrial east, with attacks focused around Bakhmut, Marinka and Lyman in the country's Donetsk province, where 46 combat clashes took place.

Ukrainian forces were advancing amid a "massive offensive" on the southern and northern flanks of the destroyed city of Bakhmut, Ukraine's Eastern Group of Forces spokesman Serhii Cherevaty told Ukrainian state television. But he didn't mention how much progress they made. The details, he said, would be disclosed once Ukrainian forces had analyzed the situation and consolidated their positions.

In its regular update Sunday morning, the General Staff said that over the previous 24 hours, Russia had carried out 27 airstrikes, one missile strike and around 80 attacks from multiple rocket launchers, targeting regions in the north, northeast, east and south of the country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Black Sea port city of Odesa on Sunday — the day the country honors its navy — to hear a report from the navy commander, discuss prospects for the development of a naval drone and missile program, as well as present awards to service members.

In Russia, local officials reported that air defense systems shot down a drone over the Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, while the neighboring Kursk region faced shelling attacks. No casualties or damage were reported.

Following the drama of Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin's rebellion last week, Russian authorities remained defiant. Vyacheslav Volodin, speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, said Sunday that Russian President Vladimir Putin came out of this situation "having strengthened his position even more both in the country and in the world."

Russian society, he said, "having passed this test, has shown its maturity." According to Volodin, there was "not a single example of someone supporting the rebellion."

Israel air force attacks Syria; Syrian air defense missile explodes

BEIRUT (AP)—Israel carried out airstrikes on areas near the central Syrian city of Homs early Sunday causing material damage but no casualties, the Syrian military said in a statement.

A Syrian anti-aircraft missile exploded over Israeli territory, the Israeli military said, prompting another round of strikes.

Syrian state media quoted an unnamed military official as saying the air defenses shot down some of the missiles fired by Israeli warplanes flying over neighboring Lebanon.

Israeli authorities did not comment on the airstrike on Homs. But the military said one of the Syrian air defense missiles exploded over Israeli territory without causing any damage. Israeli police said the rocket's remains landed in the southern Israeli city of Rahat.

In response to the rocket, Israeli jets struck the air defense battery from where the anti-aircraft rocket was launched. The military said it also struck other targets, without elaborating.

Israel, which has vowed to stop Iranian entrenchment next door, has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets in government-controlled parts of neighboring Syria in recent years, but it rarely acknowledges them.

The last suspected Israeli airstrike on Syria was on June 14, near the capital Damascus that left one soldier wounded.

Israel has also targeted the international airports in Damascus and the northern Syrian city of Aleppo several times over the past few years, often putting it out of commission.

Overdrive

Family-friendly 2024 Kia EV9 delivers luxury without the pretense

By LARRY PRINTZ
Tribune News Service

The word luxury is overused.

If your apartment building has a doorman, a sizable pool and secluded cabanas, as well as a grocery store, a florist, a beauty salon, a restaurant and bar, a pharmacy, and a dry cleaner all located on the lobby, you're living in luxury. If your building has little more than a gym, you're living in an ad copywriter's "luxury."

Carmakers, too, call their vehicles luxury or premium even when they're not, adding a premium nameplate or a little faux carbon fiber trim to preserve the illusion. But Kia doesn't play this game, even when it delivers vehicles that offer a genuine premium or even luxurious driving experience. A case in point is the three-row 2024 Kia EV9, the brand's first global fully electric SUV.

KIA MOTORS/TNS

The 2024 Kia EV9 GT-Line.

About the same size as the Kia Telluride, but sporting a wheelbase that's almost eight inches longer, the crisply-drawn EV9's linear silhouette, low beltline, 21-inch wheels and modern LED lighting lend the car a contemporary feel. Walk around the back, and you'll find a shape and window design that recalls the iconic Kia Soul.

Pop open the door and you'll find seating for six or seven, and it might strike you as more spacious than allegedly premium sport utility vehicles. And, let's face it, space is luxurious. If it weren't, we'd all be driving Kia Souls.

But more than that, the cabin's persona is somewhat softer than the exterior, with firm yet comfortable seating that's heated and cooled in the first two rows, with front seat occupants also getting massaging thrones. The interior is lined with sustainable materials that boast unique textures that lend the space a postmodern premium. It's augmented by two 12.3-inch screens separated by a 5-inch screen. The 12.3-inch screen in front of the driver displays the instrument cluster, while the other houses the infotainment system. The 5-inc screen houses some, but not all, of the climate control functions. The rest are activated using conventional switch gear.

There's a lot of thoughtful design in the EV9, such as the second-row seat that swivels 180 degrees to face rearward. Or the bi-level center console that extends from the front to the second row and contains a sliding storage space for second-row passengers. In the front seat, the center console is minimized to provide a space for a handbag or manbag. And there's lots of space for cargo, 20.9 cubic feet of it, and as much as 81.9 cubic feet with the rear rows stowed.

NUTS & BOLTS

- **Base price**: Not available
- **Powertrain**: Dual electric motors
- **Horsepower/Torque**: 379/516 pound-feet
- **EPA fuel economy**: Not rated
- **Length/Width/Height**: 197.4/70.1/77.9 inches
- **Ground clearance**: 7.8 inches
- **Cargo capacity**: 20.9-81.9 cubic feet
- **Towing capacity**: 5,000 pounds

KIA MOTORS

The Kia EV9 interior.

Initially, the 2024 Kia EV9 will come as a single 160-kW electric motor and rear-wheel drive that provides 215-horsepower and 258 pound-feet of torque, along with a standard or long-range battery, as well as a dual-motor model with all-wheel drive and 379 horsepower and 516 pound-feet of torque. Its performance is significantly stronger, with a 0-60 mph time of 5 seconds, far better than the rear-wheel-drive model's 8.2-to-9.4 second time. Towing is rated at 5,000 pounds with all-wheel drive, 2,000 pounds with rear-wheel drive.

Kia didn't provide range estimates, which have yet to be issued by the EPA. But the automaker did say that the EV9 comes with a standard 800-volt electrical architecture that enables a 10-to-80% charge in less than 25 minutes, with a maximum DC charging speed of 230 kW. An 11-kW onboard charger is provided for Level 2 charging.

Standard advanced driver assistance systems including blind-spot collision, avoidance assist, lane keeping assist, intelligent speed limit assist, navigation-based smart cruise control, rear cross-traffic collision-avoidance and parking collision avoidance assist. EV9's Highway Driving Pilot provides Level 3 autonomous driving, but it's not enabled, as it isn't legal in the U.S.

The Hyundai Motor Group's E-GMP platform, which also supports the Kia EV6, Hyundai Ioniq 5, Hyundai Ioniq 6, and Genesis GV60, is used for the 2024 Kia EV9, and boasts 7.8 inches of ground clearance. It provides a solid foundation for the EV9, one that provides a twist-free foundation and helps deliver some of the hallmarks of luxury vehicles.

The EV9 I drove was a Korean-market model, as the U.S. model hasn't been finalized for U.S. sale, but most of the vehicle's features identical to what we'll get, and this is where it gets interesting.

Being an electric vehicle (EV), it possesses a total lack of noise, so much so, the company adds a soft electric noise, one that sounds not unlike the distant buzzing of a swarm of angry electronic bees, to not make it feel unnaturally quiet. And that's one of the elements that give it a premium sound: no noise. Zero. Zip. None.

Does stop-start feature make a difference?

Q: I recently purchased a 2020 Chrysler Pacifica with 64,000 miles on it. It's my first vehicle with the automatic stop-start feature that's supposed to save on fuel. Initially I noticed it didn't always engage when stopped, and the owner's manual helped me understand that it only does it when the brake is fully depressed. But I'm always asking myself: Is this really worth it? When the engine stops for only a couple seconds, like in stop-and-go-traffic, doesn't the fuel used in the re-start offset any fuel saved during the brief stop? And won't the starter (or other components?) need to be replaced sooner than if I turn this feature off altogether?

T.O, Emmaus, Pennsylvania

A: Although marginal, the stop-start feature does save some fuel and reduce emissions. An improved starter and deep cycle battery handle the job. Additionally, the engine starts in less than one revolution. If you read your manual further, you may find that several other conditions may override the function. I recently rented a Porsche while my pickup truck was in the body shop and did not care for the stop-start feature so I killed it by pressing the "A" button on the console. You can do the same by pressing the "A" switch near the radio controls.

■■■

Q: I own a 2018 Honda CR-V that I love, except for an issue that started over the last year or so. There is a really strong musty odor at the rear side of the hatchback trunk. It is all completely internal, as I have nothing in my trunk. I have also lifted the board to access the spare tire area and have confirmed that everything is dry. There is no sign of any kind of water leaking that would cause this kind of odor. I do not smell anything coming from the vents. I am baffled how to resolve this issue and get rid of this odor. It has gotten to where I hate having to put grocery bags in my trunk area when I need to because the odor frustrates me so much! I asked my Honda dealer about it during an oil change. I was told they would need to keep my CR-V overnight to inspect. It will cost me money that I do not have. Do you have any suggestions that will help me resolve this odor issue?

R.D., Plainfield, Illinois

A: The only product with which I am familiar is Biocide Auto Shocker. Unlike Febreze or odor cover-ups, it seems to eliminate the source of stink.

■■■

Q: I had a slow leak on one tire that required air once a month. I took it into a tire store, and they re-set the tire to stop the leak. They told me that the stem was fine, but the bead was not tight. I have never heard of anything like this. The tires are several years old but in good condition with low tread wear. Is there something on the rim that wears out?

D.Z., Coon Rapids, Minnesota

A: Locales in the snow belt such as Minnesota use lots of salt and other chemicals on roads in the winter. Alloy wheel corrosion is quite common. New rims may be the solution, but I would suggest trying bead sealer first to see if it seals the leak. I prefer putting winter tires on steel wheels for the winter and swapping them in the summer. If you still want alloy wheels, shop around for reconditioned wheels that cost lots less.

MOTORMOUTH

BY BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Weber's work has appeared in professional trade magazines and various consumer publications including Consumer Guide *and* Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Life & Style

Indiana Jones' box office destiny? A lukewarm $60M debut in North America

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

LUCASFILM LTD. VIA AP
This image released by Lucasfilm shows Ethann Isidore, from left, Harrison Ford and Phoebe Waller-Bridge in a scene from "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny."

Indiana Jones, and executives at the Walt Disney Co. and Lucasfilm, made a somewhat dispiriting discovery this weekend. Moviegoers didn't rush to the theater in significant numbers to see " Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" and say goodbye to Harrison Ford as the iconic archaeologist.

The film, reportedly budgeted north of $250 million, came in on the lower end of projections with $60 million in ticket sales from 4,600 North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Including $70 million from international showings in 52 markets, "Dial of Destiny" celebrated a $130 million global opening. It easily earned the No. 1 title but was not the high-rolling sendoff for one of modern cinema's most iconic actor/character pairings that anyone hoped. Disney is projecting that it will make $82 million domestically through the fourth of July holiday and $152 million globally.

"Dial of Destiny" is the long-delayed fifth installment in the Steven Spielberg/George Lucas-created adventure series that began in 1981, and the first Spielberg himself hasn't directed. Veteran James Mangold stepped in to take the reins overseeing the Spielberg-approved script, which finds an older Dr. Jones retiring from his university job and swept up on a new adventure with his goddaughter Helena (Phoebe Waller-Bridge).

"It's impressive that a franchise that's over 40 years old is No. 1 at the box office. But there's no question there were higher hopes for the debut of this movie," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "This is Indiana Jones. This is a summer movie icon."

The film made its splashy premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May, with a fitting celebration of Ford, who has said this was his last time playing the character.

But then it was hit with lukewarm reviews. This was an unexpected and unwelcome hurdle, considering it was coming after the maligned fourth film, 2008's "Indiana Jones and Kingdom of the Crystal Skull." Another contributing snag was that a significant portion of the target audience, older viewers, don't tend to buy many tickets on opening weekend for big blockbusters. But even "Crystal Skull," budgeted at a reported $185 million, managed to gross over $790 million.

- "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," $60 million.
- "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse," $11.5 million.
- "Elemental," $11.3 million.
- "No Hard Feelings," $7.5 million.
- "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts," $7 million.
- "Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," $5.2 million.
- "The Little Mermaid," $5.2 million.
- "The Flash," $5 million.
- "Asteroid City," $3.8 million.
- "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3," $1.8 million.

UK press watchdog finds a tabloid column about Meghan was sexist

LONDON (AP)—A column in The Sun tabloid that fantasized about seeing Prince Harry's wife, Meghan, being pelted with feces as she was paraded naked through the streets was sexist, Britain's press watchdog found.

The column by TV personality Jeremy Clarkson in December described how he hated the Duchess of Sussex "on a cellular level." He said she used "vivid bedroom promises" to turn Harry into a "warrior of woke" and controlled him like a sock puppet.

"The imagery employed by the columnist in this article was humiliating and degrading toward the duchess," said Edward Faulks, chairman of the Independent Press Standards Organisation. "IPSO's purpose is to protect the public and freedom of expression by upholding high editorial standards. In this case, The Sun failed to meet these standards."

The independent organization, which most U.K. newspapers, magazines and digital news outlets voluntarily commit to be regulated by, found that multiple "pejorative and prejudicial" references to Meghan's sex breached its editors' code.

"Stereotypes about women using their sexuality to exert influence ... implied that it was the duchess's sexuality—rather than any other attribute or accomplishment—which was the source of her power," the findings said.

The article inspired a record number of complaints to the regulator, which required the newspaper to inform its readers of the findings released late Friday.

The newspaper printed a headline "Jeremy Clarkson: IPSO Upholds Complaint" at the bottom of its front page Saturday and directed readers to a summary of the report where Clarkson's column typically appears on page 17. The newspaper had removed the column and apologized in December.

Clarkson, who made his name as the combative host of the BBC car show "Top Gear" and hosts motoring show "The Grand Tour" on Amazon, previously said he was "horrified" after the blowback. He apologized and promised to be more careful.

Clarkson's daughter had been among those who blasted the column. "I stand against everything that my dad wrote about Meghan Markle and I remain standing in support of those that are targeted with online hatred," Emily Clarkson posted on Instagram.

Mother refuses to let 'child' leave the nest

DEAR ABBY: I'm 22, and when I was in my teens, I was sheltered. I was often in trouble for something little. My phone was taken away from me for months, and I wasn't allowed to do anything besides go to school. It caused me to develop social anxiety.

I still live with my controlling mother and go only to work. I have no social life. I want to leave her, get a social life and experience new things, but every time I bring it up to her, she plays the victim and insists she needs me or belittles me and says I need her.

She does things for me as an "act of kindness," but it feels like she does it so I'll need her or it will never get done without her. I don't know how to get out of this situation. What is the best way to handle it?

SHELTERED IN TEXAS

DEAR SHELTERED: The longer your mother can prevent you from making friends and living a normal life for a person your age, the deeper her emotional dependence on you will become.

Start saving your money until you have enough that you can find a place (with a roommate, if necessary), and then move. Do not ask for permission because your mother will give you a dozen reasons why you should postpone it. If you have other relatives who will guide you through this growth experience, reach out to them.

You weren't being "sheltered" in your teens; your wings were being systematically clipped to prevent you from becoming independent. Taking this step may feel daunting, but for your personal growth, you must find the courage to give it a try.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: On my first date with my husband, he told me his first wife was a "fox." I thought, "How would I compete?" We are married now, but he has never told me I was pretty or anything close. He's a great husband, but these things are not in his wheelhouse.

Tonight, I was watching a game show and the winner introduced his "beautiful wife." The woman had a facial deformity, but you could tell he meant what he said. It is hurtful that my husband never sees my inner beauty. We have been married 41 years now. I knew this was how he was when we married. He excuses it by saying this is the way he is. Yet I feel so very let down now. Can you comment?

UNPRETTY IN KENTUCKY

DEAR UNPRETTY: I'm surprised that after your suitor's remark there was a second, third or fourth date. Why would he feel the need to describe his ex-wife to you? I will assume that in the ensuing 41 years you have told him how sad you are that he hasn't AT LEAST mentioned that he appreciates your inner beauty and finer qualities and how lucky he feels to have you as his wife.

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

"You knew how he was when you married him" is an excuse for his insensitivity, not an apology. I wish you would have elaborated on what makes him a great husband, because from where I sit, he's insensitive, withholding and not a very nice person.

■■■

DEAR READERS: I wish you all a happy and healthy Fourth of July. Please drive carefully and celebrate safely.

P.S. Wishing you a Happy Heavenly Birthday, Mom!

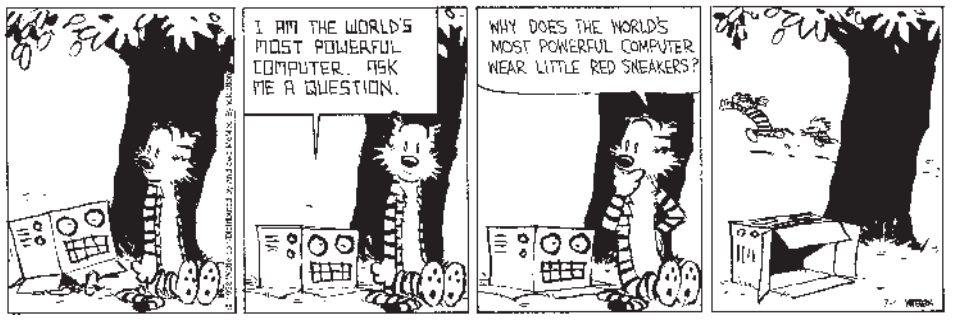
LOVE, ABBY

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

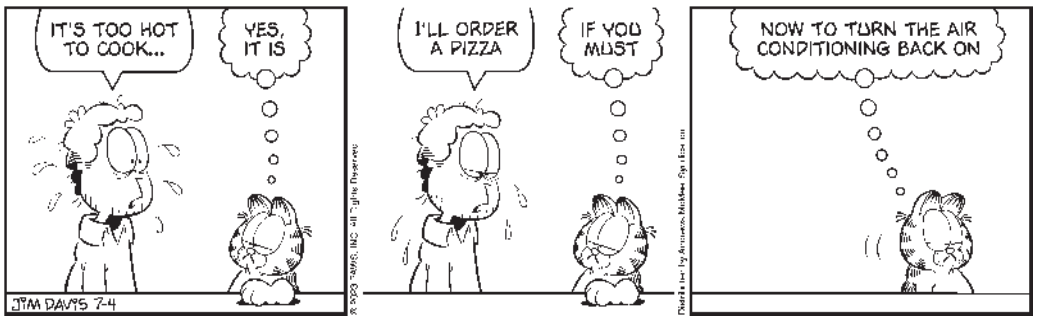
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I AM THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL COMPUTER. ASK ME A QUESTION.
WHY DOES THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL COMPUTER WEAR LITTLE RED SNEAKERS?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



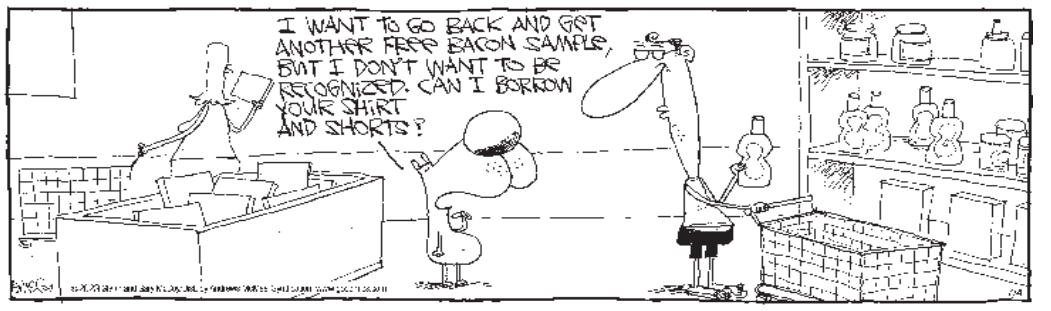
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WAIT. YOU'RE DAD'S "COFFEE COACH"?
I AM. AND I GET RESULTS.
I THOUGHT DAD WAS ALREADY PRETTY GOOD AT DRINKING COFFEE.
HE HAS LATE-NIGHT WORK TO DO. I MAKE SURE HE GETS HIS SIP REPS IN.
SIP REPS?
FUNDAMENTALS, CLAYTON. IT'S ALL ABOUT FUNDAMENTALS.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

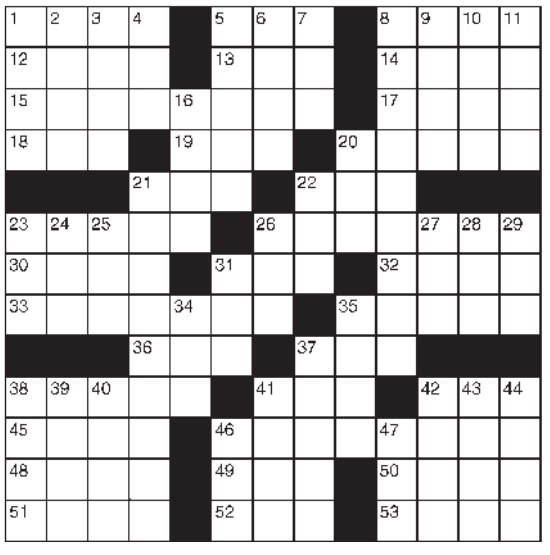
ACROSS
1 Wrestling style
5 Favorite pal, in a text
8 Circulate
12 Bone-dry
13 Caviar
14 Hawk-eyes' home
15 Kindling
17 Incursion
18 Jargon suffix
19 Hill dweller
20 Heredity factors
21 Repair
22 Spider's creation
23 Characteristic
26 Molasses-flavored pie
30 Duelist Aaron
31 Actress Adams
32 Skin soother
33 "Still I Rise" poet Maya
35 Ticket remnants
36 Stir-fry pan
37 Cooking fuel
38 Mixed metal
41 Satchel
42 Romance
45 French perfume brand
46 Aires or Leo, e.g.
48 Out of control
49 Cleric's tunic
50 "Doing my best"
51 Cleans the floor
52 Ring decision
53 Cereal in party mix

DOWN
1 Ump's ruling
2 "Exodus" author
3 Swampy terrain
4 Lyric poem
5 Big Apple borough
6 Yard fraction
7 Nourished
8 Water-spraying harbor vessels
9 Cash advance
10 Tot's boo-boo
11 Bankrolls
16 Sit tight
20 Earth (Pref.)
21 Colorful July 4th display
22 Rationale
23 TV schedule abbr.
24 Scamper
25 Bol. neighbor
26 Dallas sch.
27 Winter ailment
28 Arced tennis shot
29 "You bet!"
31 Fine, to NASA
34 Actress Myrna
35 Wise one
37 Film legend Greta
38 Eve's man
39 Wheels of fortune?
40 Air show stunt
41 Swindle
42 Accompanying
43 Shrek, for one
44 Cameo stone
46 — Tuesday
47 Bracketed word

Solution time: 22 mins.

F	A	B			A	D	A		B	O	I	I
O	P	E	C		Y	E	S		L	A	C	E
I	F	A	H		F	I	S		U	K	F	S
D	R	U	I	D		T	C	T	E			
			C	A	M		T	A	B	O	O	S
L	U	C	K	Y	M	E		M	E	R	L	E
A	L	E	E		M	A	E		R	E	A	H
S	E	N	N	A		T	E	A	R	O	F	F
S	E	I	S	I	N		K	A	Y			
			A	R	O	D		A	P	R	O	N
D	I	A	L		T	A	N		I	A	M	A
O	S	H	A		E	M	C		E	T	A	T
G	O	A	D		D	E	B		E	N	O	

Yesterday's answer 7-4



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Melanie Fiona, 40; Becki Newton, 45; Andrew Zimmern, 62; Geraldo Rivera, 80.

Happy Birthday: Call on those you trust to tell you the truth and contribute sound advice. Keep your finances in order, and don't be tempted to spend on things you don't need. Spontaneity can be thrilling and inviting but can also lead to unwanted expenses. Use your knowledge and experience to recognize what you want and how to make your dreams come true. Tenacity and creativity will pay off. Your numbers are 6, 17, 21, 27, 32, 43, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Meet inevitable change head-on. Turn negatives into positives by using what's available to you to move beyond whatever is slowing you down. Let your actions speak for you; your impact will bring about change. Choose peace over battles. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Say no to temptation and channel your energy into something worthwhile. Share your feelings with those you need in your corner to proceed. A plan that offers something for everyone will help you get the contributions you require to reach your goal. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Preparation is the key to success. Work alone to avoid setbacks and temptation. Rearrange your day to accommodate your goals, and adjust your surroundings to ensure you complete whatever you want to achieve. Love, a healthy lifestyle and self-improvement will boost your confidence. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Explore the possibilities. Learn all you can and test your theories before you invest time and money. Call on experts, but don't give your secrets away. Keep whatever you do simple, effective and within budget. Discipline will help you avoid what tempts you. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Give yourself ample room to maneuver. Walk away from negativity, manipulation and overindulgence. Love and appreciate who you are and what you can accomplish. Gratitude will manifest opportunity and happiness. When you hit a roadblock, use your ingenuity and take a different route. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Evaluate your life, love and happiness, and consider what brings you joy. It's up to you to fill your life with what makes you confident and optimistic about the future. Don't make modifications to benefit others; change to enhance your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Do what you can to help others, but not at the expense of your health or financial well-being. Don't let professional worries disrupt personal relationships. Open communication is necessary on all fronts to keep your life running smoothly. Leave nothing to chance. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Walk away from instability; overreacting will cause vulnerability. Aim to obtain the security and stability in your life that allows freedom to explore and develop what motivates and satiates you to become the master of your domain. Manifest your thoughts and desires. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Tally your financial situation and make changes that will help you save. Don't let anyone take advantage of you. Pay attention to what you offer and how you use your skills to reach your goal. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* A couple of domestic changes will impact your relationships. Follow the money trail to discover how to cut corners and build equity. Think outside the box and hone your skills to suit what's trending. A partnership looks promising. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Refuse to let your emotions run wild. Too much of anything will get you in trouble. Avoid temptation and those who try to take advantage of you. Don't let anger put a wedge between you and someone you love; with truth comes clarity. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Dig in and don't stop until you are happy with the results. It's up to you to find a unique way to bring about change that enhances your portfolio. A financial gain or unexpected gift looks promising. Put an end to emotional spending. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, adaptable and insightful. You are curious and determined.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6		3		7	8	2		
4	7						8	
9	8	2		5	4		1	6
5	6		2			1		
			7					
		7			1	8		5
8	4		5					1
7		9	4	1	3			8
						9	2	

Difficulty: ★★ 7/4

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesturday's Answer

5	4	7	3	1	9	2	8	6
1	8	9	2	6	5	7	3	4
2	6	3	4	8	7	9	5	1
7	1	5	8	2	6	4	9	3
6	9	8	7	4	3	5	1	2
3	2	4	5	9	1	6	7	8
8	5	6	9	3	2	1	4	7
9	3	2	1	7	4	8	6	5
4	7	1	6	5	8	3	2	9

Difficulty: ★ 7/3

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

BATMAN COMICS **Solution: 6 letters**

C	A	N	I	U	G	N	E	P	J	A	M	E	S	B
W	A	L	C	H	A	R	A	Ⓒ	T	E	R	S	N	A
A	O	T	F	M	S	E	V	Ⓐ	C	T	A	B	O	T
S	J	R	A	R	K	E	V	Ⓟ	E	N	Y	A	W	G
Y	U	H	C	C	E	O	V	Ⓔ	H	E	A	R	T	I
L	S	P	R	E	L	D	D	I	R	N	I	B	O	R
U	T	A	E	U	R	Y	M	A	H	K	R	A	D	L
M	I	G	M	R	C	A	S	F	A	C	E	R	E	N
O	C	E	M	A	H	O	C	M	U	I	R	A	T	R
N	E	S	G	A	F	E	G	S	N	B	N	A	E	E
E	H	E	R	F	H	R	R	R	T	O	O	H	C	T
V	L	L	I	Y	C	T	E	O	E	O	D	U	T	U
S	E	C	R	E	T	A	O	E	D	K	R	S	I	R
Y	E	T	E	R	R	O	R	G	Z	B	O	H	V	N
R	G	R	A	P	H	I	C	S	T	E	G	J	E	S

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Alfred, Archives, Arkham, Asylum, Barbara, Batcave, Batgirl, Book, Bruce, Cape, Cars, Cataclysm, Characters, Detective, Face, Freeze, Gordon, Gotham, Graphic, Harley, Haunted, Heart, Hush, James, Joker, Justice, Legacy, Officer, Pages, Penguin, Prey, Returns, Riddler, Robin, Scarecrow, Secret, Shaman, Snow, Superhero, Terror, Venom, Volume, Wayne

Yesterday's Answer: Package

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Ohtani, Trout go yard again to lead Angels past Diamondbacks

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Shohei Ohtani and Mike Trout went deep in the same game for the 30th time, Mickey Moniak provided the go-ahead homer and the Los Angeles Angels beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 5-2 on Sunday despite 12 strikeouts by Zac Gallen.

Reid Detmers (2-5) struck out nine and allowed two runs in six innings. It is the fifth straight game the left-hander has fanned at least eight and allowed two or fewer runs. He's the first Angels pitcher to do that since Nolan Ryan in 1972-73.

Carlos Estévez pitched the ninth for his 21st save.

Carson Kelly homered for the Diamondbacks, who were held to four hits.

Gallen (10-3) tied his season high for strikeouts and was one off a career-best. The right-hander came into the game tied for fifth in the NL with only seven homers allowed but allowed two in a game for the second time this season.

Ohtani hit his 31st of the season in the eighth inning with a 454-foot solo shot to right field off a slider by Kyle Nelson. It was his sixth homer during the Halos' seven-game homestand.

AP

Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani heads to first after hitting a solo home run during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Arizona Diamondbacks Sunday, July 2, 2023, in Anaheim, Calif.

BRAVES 6, MARLINS 3

ATLANTA (AP)—Ozzie Albies' two-run homer in the fifth gave Atlanta the lead and the Braves overcame an early two-run deficit to beat Miami for its 16th win in 17 games.

The Braves won their eighth straight and completed a three-game sweep to extend their lead over second-place Miami in the NL East to nine games. Atlanta has won 10 in a row at home and 23 of 26 overall.

Luis Arráez drove in two runs with two hits, lifting his batting average to .389. Arráez gave Miami a 2-0 lead with a double that drove in Jonathan Davis in the second inning. Arráez added a run-scoring single in the seventh to trim the Braves' lead to 4-3.

Spencer Strider (10-2) stuck out nine while allowing six hits and three runs, two earned, in 6 2/3 innings. Raisel Iglesias pitched a perfect ninth for his 14th save in 16 chances.

CARDINALS 5, YANKEES 1

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Jordan Montgomery beat New York for the second time since they traded him last summer, pitching St. Louis past Gerrit Cole and the Yankees, who completed a disappointing 3-3 trip.

On a day Yankees manager Aaron Boone was ejected for the fifth time this season, Montgomery (6-7) allowed an unearned run, two hits and three walks in 6 2/3 innings. He held New York hitless until Gleyber Torres doubled with two outs in the sixth.

With the Cardinals ahead 2-1, Brendan Donovan hit a two-run homer in the seventh off Jimmy Cordero.

New York split a six-game trip that began in Oakland against the major league-worst Athletics and ended at the Cardinals, who are last in the NL Central.

Cole (8-2) allowed two runs and in five innings with two walks and five strikeouts.

ROYALS 9, DODGERS 1

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Nicky Lopez matched a career-high with four RBIs, Maikel Garcia and Bobby Witt Jr. drove in two runs apiece, and Kansas City beat Los Angeles to finally wrap up a series win.

The Royals had been winless in their past 12 series to tie the second-longest stretch in franchise history.

Brady Singer (5-7) allowed one run on three hits and four walks over seven innings.

Tony Gonsolin (4-3) took the loss, allowing four runs on six hits in 3 2/3 innings.

The only offence the Dodgers mustered came in the fourth inning when J.D. Martinez drew a leadoff walk and advanced on a single by David Peralta. Miguel Vargas followed with a sacrifice fly to deep center field.

REDS 4, PADRES 3

CINCINNATI (AP)—Pinch-hitter Tyler Stephenson broke an eighth-inning tie with a two-run homer that sent Cincinnati past San Diego.

Spencer Steer also had a two-run homer and rookie Andrew Abbott struck out a career-high 12 in 7 2/3 innings as the Reds remained tied with Milwaukee atop the NL Central.

Ha-Seong Kim and Fernando Tatis Jr. hit back-to-back homers in the eighth to tie it 2-all as the Padres lost for the 10th time in 13 games.

Lucas Sims (2-1) earned the win. Tom Cosgrove (1-1) took the loss.

RED SOX 5, BLUE JAYS 4

TORONTO (AP)—Alex Verdugo hit a tiebreaking home run in the ninth inning and Boston beat Toronto to complete a three-game sweep.

Verdugo's sixth home run came on the first pitch thrown by Blue Jays closer Jordan Romano (3-4). Verdugo stood at home plate to admire his 415-foot drive into the stands behind the visitor's bullpen in right field.

Jarren Duran went 5 for 5 with four doubles and Rafael Devers reached base five times and drove in two for the Red Sox, who have won three straight following a season-high five-game losing streak. Boston is 7-0 against Toronto this season after losing 16 of 19 meetings in 2022.

Red Sox right-hander Chris Martin (2-1) worked one inning for the win and left-hander Joe Jacques finished for his first career save.

TIGERS 14, ROCKIES 9

DENVER (AP)—Javier Baez and Jake Marisnick each hit a grand slam and Detroit went deep five times to beat Colorado.

It was the first time the Tigers hit two grand slams in a game since May 15, 2009, when Brandon Inge and Ryan Raburn cleared the bases against Oakland.

The Tigers clinched the three-game series and won for the 10th time in 17 games after starting the season 27-39.

The five home runs matched the Tigers' total from their previous four games and accounted for all 14 runs. Kerry Carpenter, Jake Rogers and Spencer Torkelson also homered for the Tigers.

NATIONALS 5, PHILLIES 4

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Stone Garrett hit a grand slam, Jeimer Candelario added a solo shot and reliever Kyle Finnegan pitched out of late-inning jams that helped Washington beat Philadelphia.

The Nationals took two of three from the defending National League champions and finished a solid 6-3 on a nine-game, 10-day road trip. The worst team in the NL East, they won a series against Seattle and San Diego on the trip and have won seven of 11 overall.

Nick Castellanos hit his 12th homer of the year, connecting off Trevor Williams (5-4) into the right-field seats for the 1-0 lead in the first. Bryce Harper singled and J.T. Realmuto then crushed a two-run shot that made it 3-0.

Williams settled down and tossed five innings in a game interrupted by a 23-minute rain delay.

ORIOLES 2, TWINS 1

BALTIMORE (AP)—Minnesota closer Jhoan Duran forced in the tiebreaking run when he hit rookie Jordan Westburg with a pitch in the eighth inning, enabling Baltimore to stop a four-game skid.

The Orioles had gone 20 straight innings without a run and were poised to be swept for the first time this season before coming back from a 1-0 deficit in the eighth.

Duran struck out Gunnar Henderson before successive singles by Adley Rutschman, Anthony Santander and Aaron Hicks tied the score. After an intentional walk loaded the bases, Duran (2-3) plunked Westburg with a fastball to give the Orioles their first lead in the three-game series.

Cionel Pérez (2-1) worked a perfect eighth inning and Félix Bautista struck out the side in the ninth for his 22nd save in 27 chances.

MARINERS 7, RAYS 6

SEATTLE (AP)—José Caballero was hit by a pitch from Jason Adam (2-2) to force in the tiebreaking run, and Seattle erased an early five-run deficit in a win over Tampa Bay.

Eugenio Suárez and Tom Murphy homered for the Mariners (40-42), who took two of three games from the top team in the American League. Seattle's bullpen held the Mariners without a hit over the final three innings. Andrés Munoz (1-1) got the win and Paul Sewald earned his ninth save.

Randy Arozarena and Isaac Paredes homered for the Rays.

WHITE SOX 8, ATHLETICS 7

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Jake Burger hit his 18th home run of the season and Chicago avoided a three-game sweep.

Zach Remillard added a two-run single and Eloy Jiménez had a pair of RBI singles as the White Sox finished a seven-game trip 3-4.

Brent Rooker homered for Oakland hours after being named an All-Star.

Chicago jumped on A's starter Paul Blackburn (1-1) for five runs in the third inning. He gave up five runs on six hits in five innings, striking out five and walking four.

Aaron Bummer (3-1) was credited with the win, allowing a run in 2 1/3 innings with two strikeouts.

ASTROS 5, RANGERS 3

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Chas McCormick lined a tie-breaking triple with two outs and the bases loaded in the eighth inning, and Houston hung on to beat Texas.

McCormick's opposite-field hit over a racing Adolis García into the right-field corner came an inning after Aroldis Chapman made his Texas debut with two strikeouts in a scoreless inning.

After Nathaniel Lowe followed Corey Seager's leadoff double in the eighth with a homer to get Texas within a run, Houston's José Altuve led off the ninth with his second homer of the series.

Josh Sborz (4-3) took the loss.

BREWERS 6, PIRATES 3

PITTSBURGH (AP)—William Contreras hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the third inning, and Milwaukee beat Pittsburgh to win its third straight series.

Colin Rea (5-4) won his second straight start, allowing two runs and five hits in a season-high 6 2/3 innings. With runners on second and third in the fifth, he retired Andrew McCutchen on an inning-ending groundout.

Elvis Peguero allowed Josh Palacios' RBI double in the eighth, and Devin Williams retired three straight batters for his 17th save in 18 chances.

Milwaukee (45-39) won seven of 10 on its trip and remained tied with Cincinnati for the NL Central lead.

GUARDIANS 8, CUBS 6, 10 INNINGS

CHICAGO (AP)—Josh Naylor hit a two-run single in the 10th inning and Cleveland regrouped to beat Chicago after All-Star closer Emmanuel Clase blew a four-run lead in the ninth.

Aaron Civale pitched three-hit ball over six innings after the start of the game was delayed nearly two hours by rain. Andrés Giménez homered in the third and scored the go-ahead run in the 10th.

Giménez opened the inning as the automatic runner on second base and moved up on Amed Rosario's single. A groundout by José Ramírez left runners on second and third before Naylor drove them in with a single up the middle against Adbert Alzolay (1-4) to put Cleveland back on top 8-6.

Sam Hentges (1-0) retired all three batters in the bottom half, sending the Cubs to their sixth loss in seven games.

Sources: Sabonis, Clarkson get extension deals done with Kings, Jazz

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

All-NBA center Domantas Sabonis wasn't a free agent this summer. And he won't be for the next few summers, either.

Sabonis has agreed to a four-year contract extension with the Sacramento Kings, one that will keep him signed through the 2027-28 season, a person with knowledge of the talks confirmed Sunday.

The extension includes a raise on his salary for this coming season to nearly $31 million, and his salary for the four subsequent years will average about $47 million, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team has not announced the signing.

The total value of the deal is about $217 million. ESPN first reported the agreement on Saturday night, and The Sacramento Bee subsequently confirmed it as well.

It was part of a big-spending start to free agency this summer: Counting free agent deals that have been struck, signings of this year's rookie class and extensions, NBA teams have combined to hand out more than $3 billion in contract value since Friday night.

Sabonis would have been in line to hit the free agent market in the summer of 2024, but the Kings ensured that won't be happening. He's a huge part of the Kings' current surge; the team made the playoffs this past season for the first time since 2006 and has the entirety of its starting five—Sabonis, De'Aaron Fox, Kevin Huerter, Harrison Barnes and Keegan Murray—coming back.

Sabonis is a three-time All-Star who averaged 19.1 points and a league-high 12.3 rebounds per game this past season, earning the All-NBA nod for the first time.

Utah was finalizing an extension for guard Jordan Clarkson on Sunday as well, a second person told the AP on condition of anonymity because it had not been signed. It will have a total value of $55 million over the next three years, the person said; Clarkson had opted into a contract that would have paid him $14.3 million this coming season and now will average about $18.3 million over three years.

Clarkson averaged a career-high 20.8 points for the Jazz this past season, and the extension will push his on-court earnings well past $100 million for his career.

AP

Sacramento Kings center Domantas Sabonis against the Golden State Warriors during the first half of Game 6 in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs in San Francisco, Friday, April 28, 2023.

Also Sunday:

■ Miles Bridges signed his $7.9 million qualifying offer from Charlotte for this coming season, a source told AP after the agreement was first reported by ESPN. Bridges missed all of this past season after he was charged with domestic violence in the summer of 2022. He eventually pleaded no contest and is serving three years of probation. The NBA gave Bridges a 30-game suspension earlier this offseason, but added that because Bridges missed the entirety of 2022-23, 20 of those games are considered already served.

■ Eric Gordon agreed to a contract with the Phoenix Suns, a source told AP after the agreement was first reported by The Athletic. Gordon is a career 37% shooter from 3-point range, and is entering his 16th NBA season.

Knicks trading fan favorite Obi Toppin to Pacers

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks are trading Obi Toppin to the Indiana Pacers, dealing away a former lottery pick who was loved by fans but never as much by coach Tom Thibodeau.

The Knicks will get back two second-round picks, a person with knowledge of the details told The Associated Press on Saturday. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the trade is not yet official.

It was first reported by ESPN.

Toppin was the No. 8 pick in the 2020 draft after winning national player of the year honors at Dayton. But when that season ended early and his first professional one was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Toppin lost out on vital time to expand his skills and earn Thibodeau's confidence.

He was also stuck playing behind All-Star Julius Randle, so playing time was hard to come by. Toppin made only 15 starts in his three seasons in New York.

Fans desperately wanted more, often chanting his name at Madison Square Garden in hopes of seeing the acrobatic forward who won the 2022 NBA All-Star slam dunk contest. But Toppin never averaged more than about 17 minutes per game. He scored a career-high 9.0 points per game in the 2021-22 season.

He would have been eligible for an extension on his rookie contract, but trading him allows the Knicks to avoid having to make that decision.

Toppin had his best game of the season against the Pacers in the regular-season finale, after starting the final five games following Randle's sprained ankle. Toppin scored a season-high 34 points and tied his season best with seven rebounds in that loss.

Van Gundy, Kolber, Rose, Young among roughly 20 ESPN personalities laid off

By JOE REEDY
AP SPORTS WRITER

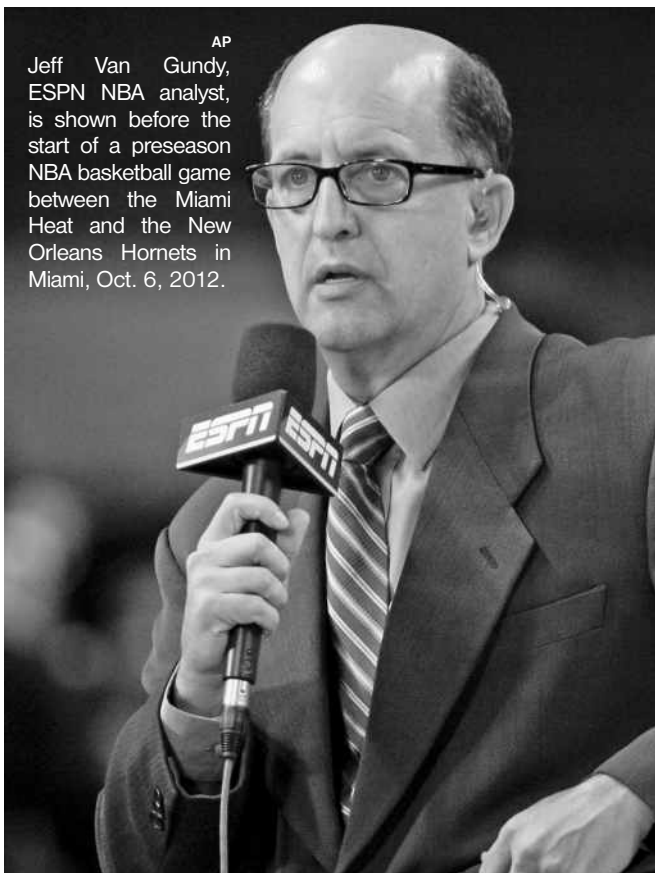
Jeff Van Gundy, Suzy Kolber, Jalen Rose and Steve Young are among roughly 20 ESPN commentators and reporters who were laid off on Friday as part of job cuts by the network.

ESPN had planned this additional round involving on-air talent to prevent further reductions to off-air staff after two rounds of mandated cuts by its corporate owner, the Walt Disney Company.

Disney CEO Bob Iger announced in February that the company would reduce 7,000 jobs either through not filling positions or layoffs.

Friday's announcement resembled what happened in April of 2017, when reporters and hosts were informed at one time that they would no longer be on the air.

"Given the current environment, ESPN has determined it necessary to identify some additional cost savings in the area of public-facing commentator salaries, and that process has begun. This exercise will include a small group of job cuts in the short-term and an ongoing focus on managing costs when we negotiate individual contract renewals in the months ahead," ESPN said in a statement. "This is an extremely challenging process, involving individuals who have had tremendous impact on our company. These difficult decisions, based more on overall efficiency than merit, will help us meet our financial targets and ensure future growth."



AP

Jeff Van Gundy, ESPN NBA analyst, is shown before the start of a preseason NBA basketball game between the Miami Heat and the New Orleans Hornets in Miami, Oct. 6, 2012.

The New York Post first reported the layoffs of Van Gundy and Rose.

Van Gundy had been the network's top NBA analyst since 2007 and recently completed calling a record 17th NBA Finals. Kolber was a longtime ESPN veteran, including being the co-host of a nightly show when ESPN2 debuted in 1993.

She was also the host of ESPN's "Monday Night Countdown" show.

"Today I join the many hard-working colleagues who have been laid off. Heartbreaking-but 27 years at ESPN was a good run. So grateful for a 38 yr career! Longevity for a woman in this business is something I'm especially proud of," Kolber said on social media.

Rose had also been with ESPN since 2007. He was mainly part of the NBA studio shows but also did a radio show for 11 years and was a co-host when Mike Greenberg's "Get Up" morning show premiered in 2018.

ESPN's NFL coverage and the radio side, were the ones to take the biggest hits.

Longtime draft analyst Todd McShay, who also contributed to college football coverage, and analyst Matt Hasselbeck were also laid off.

ESPN Radio's morning show team of Max Kellerman and Keyshawn Johnson as well as afternoon host Jason Fitz were also affected. Kellerman also did an afternoon show on ESPN, but that was unlikely to continue after Pat McAfee signed to bring his show to the network's airwaves in the fall.

Others include "SportsCenter" anchor Ashley Brewer, radio and ACC Network host Jordan Cornette, college basketball analyst LaPhonso Ellis, NBA reporter Nick Friedell, baseball writer Joon Lee and "College GameDay" analyst David Pollack.

Most will be bought out of their contracts and receive their full pay. If they want to take another job, they would have to negotiate an exit arrangement with ESPN.

Johnson and Rose might be the first two to come to mind after Shannon Sharpe left FS1's "Undisputed" due to increased tensions with co-host Skip Bayless.

ESPN is expected to continue assessing its talent pool over the next year as contracts are reviewed or negotiated for renewal. It had already started some reductions by not renewing the contracts of NHL studio analyst Chris Chelios, longtime "SportsCenter" anchor Neil Everett and NFL analyst Rob Ninkovich.

While its NFL, NHL and baseball contracts are set well into the future, negotiations for the renewal of NBA rights is expected to begin next year.

Brew Crew survives D-9ers, 10-9

LEIGH GASES

The Brewers' Byron Kaipat swings during his at bat in one of their games in the 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Brewers chipped away at the one run D-9ers lead heading into the last inning and won walk-off style, 10-9, in the 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan Baseball League last Friday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The D-9ers were at 8-7 by the sixth inning but the Brewers' Jerome Delos Santos' double and Devyn Flores' triple salvaged two runs off their base hits for the lead, 9-8.

Only one run was made by the D-9ers for a tie 9-9 ball game in the last inning, which allowed the Brewers to capitalize as Reid Teregeyo hit the game-winning RBI single that brought home Diego Camacho, 10-9.

The D-9ers were hot at the start of the game with two early runs in the first inning by a lead off single by Isaiah Lizama, who scored on an RBI single by Ben Lizama, and who then made it a 2-0 ball game after an RBI base hit by John Benavente.

The Brewers replied as they put up three in the second for a 3-2 lead as also their Top 3 of the lineup—Flores, Verlance Secharmidal, and Franko Nakamura—scored.

The Brewers scored four more after a one run third inning and a three run fourth inning thanks to the D-9ers' shoddy defense that allowed Flores to reach third base on a triple and Secharmidal to reach base right after.

Six runs came from the bats of the D-9ers right after as they put up a fight against Brewers pitcher Kaipo Dikito for a one run lead heading into the last couple of innings. The D-9ers could not hold on as the Brewers staged a successful comeback walk-off win in the last inning for a close game.

The Brewers are now at five wins and four losses, while the D-9ers dug deeper into the trenches at two wins and seven losses.

The games from last Wednesday (Braves vs Cardinals) and Thursday, (Natives vs Bandits) were postponed due to unplayable field conditions due to the weather.

Games will continue on Wednesday, July 5, between the Cardinals and Falcons, Thursday between Survivors and D-9ers, and Friday between the Blue Jays and Bears.

Cataluna wins May tourney by a mile

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Cataluna

Freddie Cataluna left the rest of the field biting his dust to win the Fil-Taga Golfers Association May Ace of the Month Tournament held last May 20 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

The Iloilo, Philippines native shot a net score of 65.5 after taming the greens and fairways of Kagman golf course. The 3.5-handicapper shot an excellent gross score of 69.

The 55-year-old businessman said topping the May tourney was unexpected because he started the 18 rounds of golf with a so-so game.

"I played earlier and was not happy with my game. I usually shoot better after 3-4 holes. Weather was very good for scoring and I also liked the greens on the west course. I just enjoyed playing and loving golf whether you shot good or bad. The key is accepting you're an amateur and just enjoy it," he said.

He dedicated his win last May to his very supportive wife and their children.

"I'm dedicating the win to them for letting me play the game I love."

Cataluna said the sport of golf is a hard game that prioritizes mental strength more than the physical one, "but you just enjoy it without expecting to win as more often than not it makes you relax and focus."

"With my 3 handicap it's trusting your ability and understanding the elements. Also I try to stay on my routine and mindset to make myself better each hole," he added.

Ronnie Santos came second with a net score of 70 after shooting a gross of 87, while completing the Top 3 was Das Krishnan who had a net of 74 after the 1-handicapper shot a gross of 75.

The rest of the May tourney participants, with their net score in parenthesis, were Ruben Avendano (76), Albert Pajarillaga (77), Jhun Cayetano (77), Lito Mendoza (79), Roland Merar (80), and returnee Antonio Tabornil (gross 98).

In the par 3 competition, Cataluna topped holes No. 3 and 13, while Merar was without peer in hole No. 17.

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Hot Shots to catch up by the last inning because at this point, they had only brought in two runs—one in the second inning by Mardina Kaipat and one in the fifth inning also by Kaipat.

The Hot Shots could not climb out of the 19-run deficit in their last at-bat and with the last out, the Lady Blue Jays celebrated their perfect season and championship win.

The Lady Blue Jays team along with Pangelinan, Deleon Guerrero, Aldan, and Salalila, were Kiana "Baby K" Camacho, Bong Babauta, Bert Camacho, Amy Cabrera, Alannah Sablan, Keolani Rios, Rayna Deleon Guerrero, Leigh Gases, and Christy Aldan.

Lady Blue Jays team manager Froilan Camacho, who was also the manager of the championship team Queens of Diamond last season, said they finally completed a season undefeated.

Almost all but three players from the Queens of Diamond are players in the Lady Blue Jays and so basically made it a repeat championship win—just under a different team name.

He said, "their performance stood out through the whole season. Nobody held back anything and they just went out there and had fun." He added what made them undefeated this season was their players' discipline in practice and in their games.

On his team this season, he said "I don't need to change anything. They just have to always work together. I thank my coaches Jun and Paul Salalila for training them to do their best and to have fun."

He also thanked the team for a great season and the team's sponsors, Pacific Rim and Paradiso Resort and Spa.

Camacho said they are the team to beat again for next season as they will come back to defend their title.

Results of the men's division champion will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

LEIGH GASES

CNMI's Orrin Pharmin, left, and Angel San Nicolas race to the finish line in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championship at the Oleai Sports Complex.

CNMI

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Greg Borja took home two gold medals and one silver in his 45 age group. He was the lone participant in the 60m at 9.53 seconds. He then won gold in the long jump at 3.81m; Wania won silver at 3.64m; and CNMI's Jess Gariguez won bronze at 2.76m.

Anthony Borja, in the 40 age group. won one gold and one bronze. He got gold in the shot put at 11.15m and bronze in the discus throw at 27.01.

Kelvin Fitial won one gold and silver in his 35 age group. He took the top spot in the shot put at 10.69m; Micronesia's Joseph Dabana won silver at 9.63m; and bronze was won by Pharmin at 7.69m.

He took home silver in the discus throw at 25.53m. Gold went to Dabana at 30.58m.

Eptes Epity won one gold in the 50 age group shot put throw at 9.23m; Wania won one gold in the 45 age group 200m race at 33.73 seconds and won two silver medals.

Manolo Sitchon won six silver medals in his 65-year-old age group. He was second in the half marathon, shot put, discus, hammer throw, weight throw, and throws.

NMA

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dermined the spirit of sportsmanship and unity that they hold dear.

"Northern Marianas Athletics is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting athletics within our community. We rely on the generosity of individuals like you to continue our mission of providing access to the sport and fostering a positive environment."

NMA is thus kindly requesting the community's assistance in identifying those responsible for the senseless act.

"If you have any information regarding the individuals involved or any leads that may aid us in resolving this crime, we implore you to reach out to us immediately. Together, we can hold the culprits accountable and restore our container to its former state. Acts of vandalism pose a threat to our shared spaces, and it is vital that we unite against them. If you possess any information, regardless of how insignificant it may seem, please contact us or the Department of Public Safety. We assure you that your identity will remain anonymous, and your assistance will be greatly valued."

For leads, contact NMA secretary general Robin Sapong at rsapong@gmail.com or text or call (670) 788 0929 or the Department of Public Safety CNMI Crime Stoppers hotline at (670) 234-7272.

2023 Oceania Cup and Oceania Masters Championships

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY LEIGH GASES

Runners from the CNMI and Micronesia take off from the starting line in the men's 100m race of the Oceania Cup at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

Women runners from Melanesia, Polynesia, the CNMI, and Micronesia dart out of the starting line of the women's 100m race during the Oceania Cup at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

Masters runners from Australia and the CNMI taking part in the men's 60m run out of the starting line in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports track and field.

Polynesia's Stanley Iakopo leaps in the long jump event during the Oceania Athletics Masters Championship in the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

Oceania Athletics president Robin Sapong, left, poses with Papua New Guinea's Adrine Monagi representing first place Melanesia during the Oceania Cup awards ceremony in the last day of the Taste of Marianas.

The CNMI's Greg Borja launches into the air during the men's long jump of the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

The CNMI's Sheila Isla runs in the women's 40 age group during the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

The CNMI's Jesse Gariguez leaps during his long jump attempt in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championship at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

From left, the CNMI's Sheila Isla, Rhonda Gross, and Jessica Ortizo run the track during their women's 40-44 age group race in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

Participants of the women's 40-44 age group line up and march to the starting line of their running event during the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

Ohtani, Trout go yard again to lead Angels past Diamondbacks.

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Sports

Brew Crew survives D-9ers, 10-9.

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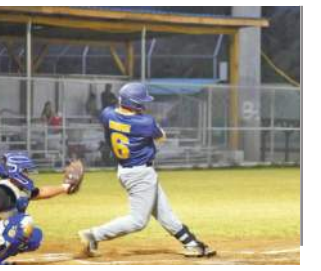

Perfect Lady Blue Jays win 2023 BASA tiara

LEIGH GASES

The Lady Blue Jays pose for a photo after winning the women's division championship of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League when they defeated the Hot Shots in a best-of-two championship tournament last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The perfect Lady Blue Jays have swept the 2023 season of the Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League women's division and topped it off with the championship win.

They defeated the Hot Shots in two championship games, with their last game a blowout 21-2 win last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

The Lady Blue Jays brought their A game and doused the fire of the Hot Shots early on as they led 5-1 by the third inning.

The real action came in the last inning when the Lady Blue Jays attacked Hot Shots pitching and brought in 11 runs.

Destiny Pangelinan hit a bases-clearing, grand slam home run after all batters up and down the lineup made it on base and were brought home with back-to-back singles, one double by Rachel Salalila, and two triples by Kianu Aldan.

The Lady Blue Jays basically had all their parts in working order as their pitcher Angel Deleon Guerrero, only gave up only seven hits throughout the whole game. She was also backed up by her defense as they made some spectacular saves on the field.

It was a long shot for the

See PERFECT on Page 22

CNMI men top Oceania Masters Championships

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The CNMI's older athletes marched to the Oleai Sports Complex track and field for a chance to represent their islands and prove that they can still run, jump, and throw in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships held from June 22 to 26.

They went out with a bang as almost all CNMI athletes had a podium finish in their respective events.

In the men's events, James Lee hauled in three gold medals in his stint. He claimed gold in the 40-year-old age group 60m with a 8.67 seconds sprint; the CNMI's Steven Beyer won silver with 8.98 seconds; third was Samoa's Sam Chong at 9.44 seconds; and fourth went to the CNMI's Micah Page at 10.30 seconds.

Lee topped the 100m at 13.72 seconds; Beyer got silver with 14.81 seconds; and third was Page at 17.30 seconds

Lee was the lone participant in the long jump for gold with a 4.08m jump and placed in the shot put with a 8.33m throw.

Orrin Pharmin also collected three gold medals as he sprinted the fastest in the 35-year-old age group in the 60m at 8.03 seconds; silver went to the Marshall Islands' Kevin Harkey at 9.35 seconds; and third place went to CNMI's Kelvin Fitial at 12.19 seconds.

Pharmin won gold in the 100m at 13.14 seconds and silver went to Harkey at 16.07 seconds. He also won gold in the 200m as the lone participant at 26.97 seconds.

Tony Ichiuo mirrored Lee and Pharmin with three gold medals of his own. He was the lone participant for the 55-year-old age group in the 60m at 9.54 seconds.

He won gold in the shot put 8.93m and silver went to Papua New Guinea's Brett Green at 8.29m. He completed his haul with a gold in the discus throw at 30.84m; silver went to Green at 23.91m; and bronze went to Phillip at 23.04m

Angel San Nicolas had five gold medals as the lone participant in the 30-year-old age group in the discus, shot put, hammer, and javelin throws.

Daniel Joab had three gold medals himself in the 45 age group shot put at 10.61m and silver went to the CNMI's Greg Borja at 6.58m.

Joab won gold in the hammer throw at 21.68m; silver went to the CNMI's Leo Wania at 16.41m; and CNMI's Greg Iginoef got bronze at 14.15m. Joab was the lone participant in the discus throw for gold at 27.68m

Nick Gross of the 40-year-old age group won one gold in the discus throw at 29.69m and one bronze in the shot put at 9.34m.

See CNMI on Page 22

LEIGH GASES

The CNMI's James Lee is seen leaping into the air during his long jump attempt and won three gold medals in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex.

NMA equipment container vandalized

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The vandalized equipment storage container of the Northern Marianas Athletics at the Oleai Sports Complex.

By MARK RABAGO
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The shipping container that serves as the equipment storage of the Northern Marianas Athletics at the Oleai Sports Complex was vandalized over the weekend and the sports federation wants the public's help to find the perpetrators.

"We are deeply disheartened to inform you about a recent act of vandalism that occurred at our track and field equipment container. Our container, which holds the tools and equipment that fuel our passion for athletics, has been maliciously targeted by vandals," NMA said in a social media post.

The federation, which recently successfully hosted the 2023 Oceania Cup and Oceania Masters Championships, said the act not only damaged their equipment but also un-

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